THE NEW MYSTICISM

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THE NEW MYSTICISM

SIX LECTURES

BY

ADELA M. CURTIS

THIRD EDITION

1913

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To James Porter Mills, M.D. (U.S.A.)

Dear Dr. Mills,

When I first published these Lectures at the request of my old students in literature, I deliberately withheld any mention of your name lest the faults of the pupil should reflect upon the master, and I took comfort then in the hope that the next book would be less unworthy of the dedication I had purposed. But now that the next is nearly finished I find myself in the same plight, for it falls as far short of the mark I had aimed at as this bit of 'prentice-work; and since it seems that I shall indefinitely postpone acknowledgment of your teaching if I wait until I feel that I can do it adequately, I take this opportunity of a revised edition to thank you with all my heart for those four years of initiation into Silence which gave me Health of "mind, body and estate."

I have the honour to be,
Your disciple in Truth,
ADELA MARION CURTIS.

May, 1909.
School of Silence,
Kensington, London.

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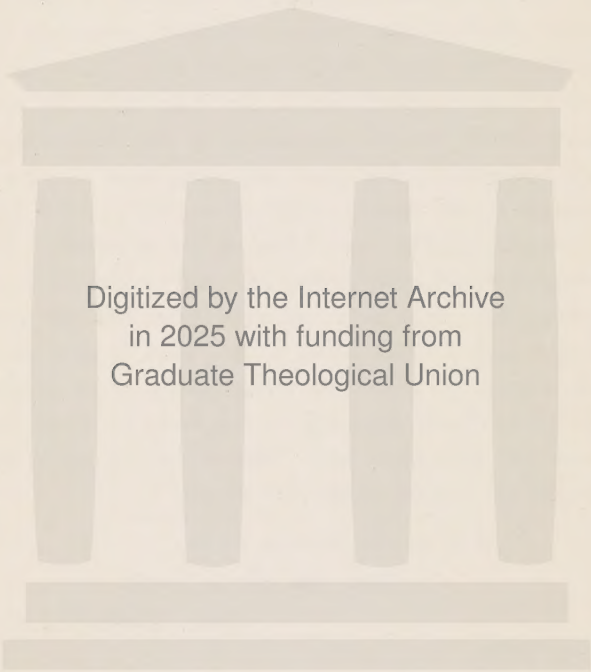
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LECTURE I.

American Mysticism compared with European and Oriental Mysticism.

THE word Mysticism is so variously understood that it may be well to start our enquiry into its latest phase by agreeing upon some simple straightforward definition which will allow for all our minor differences of opinion.

The *Twentieth Century Dictionary* gives the following: "Mystic, one who seeks for direct intercourse with God in elevated religious feeling or ecstacy. Mysticism, the doctrine of the mystics, a tendency of religious feeling marked by an effort to attain to direct and immediate communion with God. (Gr. *mystes*, one initiated—*muein*, to close the eyes.)" If we cut out the clause about ecstasy, which is but fair considering that ecstasy was regarded by the most celebrated mystics as accidental rather than essential to their purpose, we shall begin to get at what we want. Mystic, one who seeks for direct intercourse with, or immediate knowledge of, God.

If, further, we agree that the word God may be rendered as Creative Principle, Substance, or First Cause of all existence, we shall then get a definition wide enough to include the most cautious of agnostics. *Mystic, one who seeks for direct*

knowledge of the Creative Principle. That should serve us. For, whether we are aware of it or not, at some time in our lives, consciously or subconsciously, we all want to know whatever there is to be known about our origin and our destiny. So, we are *all* mystics, and as such it is worth our while to know the latest discoveries in this universal search for the Source of Life, Knowledge, and Power.

During the last fifty years, there has been a development of thought in America which shows so many points of superficial likeness to previous phases of mental evolution in the Old World, that it is easy at first for observers to mistake the whole movement for the arrogance of a youthful nation which flatters itself that each step in its career is an advance upon the rest of mankind, when in reality it is only repeating the experiences of its elders.

But underlying this obvious and shallow resemblance to the mysticism of Europe and the East with which we are all more or less familiar, there are deep and radical differences in this American mysticism which I propose, with the help of your kind attention, to examine as carefully as we can in the time, because they suggest something which intimately concerns us all.

This is nothing less than the fact that humanity

is beginning to evolve a wholly *new order of consciousness;* an order which will be recognised, dimly perhaps, and not without some distress in parting from old ideas, but still recognised and welcomed by those whose experience has prepared them for it. If to these I should seem absurdly inadequate to my subject, I can only beg their indulgence for one who has had as yet but a four years' novitiate. It is a colossal project this of quickening the evolution of a consciousness which is said to have taken millions of years to reach its present stage, and for many people the statement that such a change is possible is too startling for belief. The wonder is, not that we seem to be slow in the outward and sensible results we get from this new teaching but, that with far less than four years' practice we can prove its truth for ourselves in our own souls and bodies.

The many varieties of American mysticism may be conveniently grouped under three aspects, or schools :

1. A rudimentary school which frankly devotes itself to circumstances, and aims at worldly welfare, social success, acquisition of wealth, beauty, influence, and the control of private and public business. The chief factor in this school is the Will.
2. The secondary school concerns itself with the

inner or mental constitution of man, which necessarily includes the world of visible effects. In this school the agents are the Will and the Conscious or Personal Mind.

3. The third school aims at realising the innermost Principle or Substance of Man "in mind, body, and estate," by means of the Will, the Conscious or Personal Mind, and the Subconscious or Universal Mind.

With regard to the first school, it may seem strange to call it mysticism at all, for while our intellectual faculties are developing along the line of differentiation, and we are being trained in discriminative power, we are inclined to divide this type sharply away from the mystical, and call it "rank materialism." Later, when the unifying process begins in us, we see that the materialist is quite as much of a mystic as the idealist. He, too, is seeking immediate knowledge of the Principle of Life, but since he is at the stage in evolution where physical sensation is more immediate to him than the emotion roused by abstract ideas, he must needs seek for God in such terms as he is capable of understanding. He is of immense value in the general scheme because he draws attention to a side of life which idealists are apt to neglect, a side of life of which we learn to appreciate the real worth when we begin to perceive something

equally beyond both materialism and idealism. The truth about the body and its circumstances does not come to us during the first or the second term of our personal evolution: in the first we overvalue it, and in the second we underrate it; in the third we begin to get it right.

So far then from looking down at this class we shall recognise it as the other side of idealism: one of the two extremes which make up the twin aspect of every human soul.

The astute and energetic leaders of this school have borrowed or rediscovered the methods and phraseology of ancient and mediaeval occultism, and the alchemy, magic, and astrology of India, Egypt, and Chaldea serve side by side with the latest theories of European scientists as subject-matter for their newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and books, which are in wide circulation throughout America. Business men are informed in cunning advertisements that for a green-back they can learn an infallible way to ensure the success of their commercial adventures; trembling lovers are assured that rivals can be overcome, and happiness secured, by the purchase of a certain publication, or by subscription to certain lectures or correspondence classes; and the ambitious of all sorts are invited to exchange their dimes and dollars for a secret which shall give them their heart's desire.

This sort of jugglery is as old as the human race, and its reappearance in a highly civilised nation like America might be dismissed as a curious "survival" of our primitive and common ancestry but for two features which distinguish it from the familiar forms of Black and White Magic.

This movement, even at its lowest—and I have purposely presented its grosser side—is based upon the conviction:

1. That man has all power within himself to govern his conditions.
2. That every man can develop this power by his own will.

Here, then, we have a distinct advance upon both the Eastern and the European correspondences to this type of thought; for in them man is supposed to be under a fatal necessity to propitiate, defy, or elude a host of external and antagonistic powers. Powers of air, of water, of fire, and of earth, powers of metal and wood and stone, powers of beast, of man, of heroes, angels, demons, demigods and gods innumerable; all these had somehow to be "squared" before man could work his will in the old days. But our practical, long-headed cousins have swept all that into limbo, and in its stead they declare that man's only foe is doubt of his own unlimited power. So, we

read fairy-like tales of how one woman from the depths of poverty and despair became the millionaire owner of a flourishing town, of how another had but to think of an innocent man in prison for him to be unexpectedly released and his reputation restored, of children being taught foreign languages by clairvoyant reading, of marvellous cures of illness, of miraculous escapes from peril, of strange windfalls of wealth, etc. It is easy to smile at the crudity and extravagance with which these things are often set forth, but when due allowance has been made for the unintentional exaggeration of enthusiasts, and the deliberate fraud of charlatans, there remains an incontrovertible basis of fact to serve as a fresh milestone on the road of human progress.

Psychology is the youngest of the sciences, but it has already formulated for us certain laws which explain and make natural the most startling of these phenomena, and the more we know of mental science, the less we shall be likely to misunderstand this elementary form of American Mysticism: for if it should do nothing more it has at least awakened courage in hundreds of thousands of despairing hearts by preaching at the top of its voice that "man *has* dominion over all the earth."

True, it has yet to learn that the will has other

and higher uses than to serve the senses; true, it has still to reckon with that little haunting phrase about "gaining the whole world and losing one's own soul," but inasmuch as this movement of American self-reliance and independence teaches men and women to look *within themselves* for power, it is nearer the truth as revealed by the Master, who said: "The Kingdom of God is *within you,*" than either the Eastern doctrine of non-resistance as understood and practised by the masses of India and China, or the European doctrine of resignation to the will of a creator who torments his creatures.

From the evolutionary point of view there could be no comparison between a nation which blindly submitted to poverty, misery, disease, and death as to the decree of God, and one whose will to conquer such conditions was backed by belief in its power to do so.

Of course there is nothing new in the idea that life here in the body can be indefinitely prolonged. Ecstatics have been known in all ages, and in all countries, who declared that they were going to live for ever. There are legends of individuals, centuries old, who dwell in the Himalayas and show themselves to the faithful. Many modern Hindus practise a system of Yoga for the development of extraordinary powers over the body, and

European travellers have written accounts of the wonders they have seen performed by these Hatha Yogis. The tradition of the elixir of life captivated the imagination of mediaeval alchemists and Rosicrucian philosophers, and everybody remembers how it has been used by artists of our own day in *Zanoni* and *The Wandering Jew*.

But while there is nothing actually new in the idea that death can be postponed, or replaced by another sort of change, gentle and imperceptible, and involving no decay, it *is* new in the world's history to see this idea soberly accepted as a work-a-day possibility by multitudes of hard-headed, money-making Americans who treat it with the same business-like coolness with which they discuss radium, edible cacti, or any other scientific triumph. The phantasy of the eccentric few is becoming for the normal many an ultimate certainty in the evolution of Man.

This new attitude toward death is common to all varieties of American mysticism. But among those who belong to the third group it is seldom spoken of: for they find that to realise health of body and soul by living in the Truth of each moment as it comes leaves them no time to take thought for the future.

"The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." But there are a few other enemies to be

met and conquered first. It is as well to learn how to walk before trying to run, and the first step toward endless life is to get a mind and body free from disease.

With reference to those who have died, there is a teaching of supreme comfort: but it is so little a matter of words, and so much a matter of changing one's entire habit of thought and feeling, that it is impossible to deal with it in the fraction of an hour.

To turn now to the second phase of American mysticism, it is interesting to notice that while students of art and letters in Europe were speculating, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, as to the possible development of Trans-Atlantic literature, and were impatiently awaiting the advent of some national genius who should unlock a fresh treasure-house of thought for the world, the germ of the future had been quietly unfolding at a point in the racial consciousness where no one dreamed of looking for an intellectual renaissance.

It is not surprising that the new life was overlooked. It had no literary or artistic beauty that men should desire it. Expectant eyes on the watch for a philosopher more transcendental than Emerson, a poet more robust than Walt Whitman, or more humane than Lowell, and a novelist more

psychological than Henry James, would hardly penetrate the disguise of genius which expressed itself with a sublime disregard for the traditions of "culture."

If it was hard for an Epicurean of Ancient Rome to detect the beauty of a new religion whose unphilosophical language repelled him as much as it attracted his slave, it is almost as hard for a cultivated Englishman of to-day to appreciate a new conception of the religion he thinks he already understands, when it is presented with an entire absence of all those intellectual gifts and graces which he regards as indispensable to his ideal of a Christian.

To one whose brain and nerves are steeped in the charm of two thousand years of Christian Idealism it is a hard saying that these matter-of-fact Americans have discovered a higher order of consciousness than the great heritage of thought and feeling which he has been trained to cherish as something sacred and most precious.

But after the first shock of surprise and humiliation, which is perhaps inevitable for those whose intellectual riches make it hard for them to enter the Kingdom of Spiritual Knowledge, there is nothing monstrous in this latest example of the law of evolution. Since the intelligence of Europe after twenty centuries of Christianity had so far failed "to solve the riddle of the painful earth,"

that earth had become incomparably more painful, and the riddle more desperately complex, it was but natural that some younger nation whose mental vigour had not yet been tamed by the opiate of dreams, and whose will to live had never been weakened by sophistries about the beauty of death, should set itself to find the solution upon which its life depended.

In sheer self-preservation, America, most nervous of the nations, had to find something better than that traditional acceptation of Christianity which has quickened the human organism from the physical to the psychical, and increased its capacity for suffering to such a degree that it has at last reached its limit in nervous insanity.

Urged by this instinctive necessity—to which the English temperament responds more slowly but none the less surely—the shrewd, sceptical, popular mind of America, independent of authority, unhampered by tradition, impatient of sentiment, and utilitarian to the point of measuring ideas by the dollar, has achieved the greatest of all the triumphs of Protestantism. Luther's original protest against the Church of Rome, and the great Reformation which followed, are child's play compared with the gage flung down to the world by this New Thought of America which calls for nothing less than the re-formation of the whole human consciousness.

By the way, I use the term New Thought, not as applying to any particular sect or teacher, but in a generic sense as including all varieties of Amerian mysticism. And their name is Legion. Even for those who sympathise with the movement as a whole, it is often difficult to understand and harmonise the many different modes in which it is expressed. Such variety, and apparent conflict of parties, seems to an onlooker to betoken some radical error in the doctrine. But these degrees of difference really correspond to certain stages in the evolution of personality, and so far from being signs of weakness which must end in disaster, they are signs of a fine flexible strength adaptable to the needs of a most heterogeneous people.

What then is America's great discovery? Briefly, it might be stated as this:—The nature of man is neither physical, nor psychical, but spiritual, and knowledge of this truth concerning himself is the cure for all ill.

"But," replies enlightened Europe, "we have always known this. Of course we are spiritual beings. Is not God our Father?"

"Then if you know this," asks America, "Why are you ill? Why are you poor? Why do you die?"

And Europe answers, "Jesus suffered, Jesus was poor, Jesus died."

But America says, "Jesus *Christ* healed the sick, raised the dead, found His tax-money in the mouth of a fish, fed nine thousand people on twelve loaves and a few small fishes, proved that no violence could destroy His power over His body, and said to His followers, 'He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.' Did the *Christ* suffer? Was the *Christ* poor? Did the *Christ* die?"

Here then is a great gulf fixed between the mystics of America and those of Europe and the East. Neither St. Francis of Assisi who wedded Lady Poverty, nor the great Buddha who renounced his kingdom for a beggar's robe and bowl, would agree with this new saying that it is not spiritual to be poor. The redemption of money, and every other symbol of power, from the ignorance which has kept them separate as things "common and unclean," without part or lot in holiness, is one of the crucial points of difference between the old mysticism and the new. It is a conception which throws a flood of light upon that prophetic verse in the Revelation of St. John: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of

Our Lord, and of His Christ." The world has so long been associated with the flesh and the devil in a trinity of evil at enmity against God, that readjustment to this new way of thinking of it "in the Unity of the Spirit" is not altogether easy. It seems to bear a dangerous resemblance to a Pantheism which would remove the ancient landmarks of right and wrong, and reduce consciousness to a primitive chaos, "without form and void."

Moreover, a practical appreciation of money and all the world of the senses which it represents, does not appear to be consistent with the declaration that "There is no matter."

The attitude of European critics towards this point in American mysticism is much like Lord Byron's frame of mind in his well-known couplet:

> "When Bishop Berkeley said there was no matter,
> I think it was no matter what he said."

Berkeleian metaphysics, which regard the world as the reflection of consciousness, are scarcely more popular in England to-day than they were one hundred and fifty years ago; for when England, in retracing the steps of her forerunners in national evolution, discovered for herself this truth which had been treasured for ages by India and China, she threw it aside as fit only for the dreamy, subjective East, and worse than useless for the busy, executive West.

But this "stone which the builders rejected" here in England, "has become the headstone of the corner" in America. Indeed, so conspicuous is the place it occupies in the New Thought that many people glance at it, label it "Berkeleianism—badly expressed," and pass it by, little guessing what they have missed.

If we wait long enough to feel our way into the difference behind this deceptive appearance of likeness we shall be well rewarded for our patience.

The Buddhist, or Hindu, looking out through "the five gateways of the soul," and seeing the universe as the reflection of his personality or self-consciousness, turns from it as from Maya, an illusion of the senses, a false self which he denies, saying "Neti, Neti," "Not this, not this." As a consequence there comes a gentle but immoveable contempt for the body and the whole realm of manifestation or existence. Since the Unmanifested alone *is*, and all else but *seems* to be, how can there be attachment, by either attraction or repulsion, to this state of dream; how can there be any desire but to be re-absorbed into the blissful Nirvana of Pure Being?

This longing to be lost in God, to escape from the limitations of self-consciousness, has been the cry of the mystic in all lands and in all ages. And it has always been considered spiritual. The

new mysticism says that it is not in the least spiritual; it is only a growing-pain. Man in his present psychical state, midway between the physical and the spiritual, the animal and the divine, is governed by the law of alternation. In this intermediate phase of evolution everything is necessarily apprehended as "pairs of opposites" in action and reaction. Hence our consciousness of Spirit and Matter, Soul and Body, Good and Evil, Life and Death, Eternity and Time, Joy and Sorrow, God and the Universe, Being and Existence. To such a condition of restless duality, cessation of existence seems to be the only way of attaining to unity. So, in the East we school ourselves to relinquish all desire for manifestation, that we may be withdrawn into the Unmanifest; and in the West we practise a similar art of detachment by trying to live in the world as being not of it. In both, this relation to the world implies a belief that the spiritual or God-like consciousness is not to be attained by man while he is limited by a physical or sensuous environment.

America, on the contrary, declares that it is only by the redemption of the body that man will attain to the spiritual or Christ-consciousness. She says that here and now we can evolve the divine nature which is our true and real Substance, *by re-forming our conception of matter, by*

re-generating our consciousness of ourselves and the universe.

And here, Science has something to say. Those who have read the Romanes lecture for 1903 by Sir Oliver Lodge on "Modern Views of Matter," and Mr. A. J. Balfour's review of modern scientific achievement in his Cambridge address of 1904 to the British Association on "The New Theory of Matter," will remember how clearly all investigation is pointing to mind as the ultimate substance of matter. On all sides we are being driven from our old conception of matter as distinct and different in kind from spirit, to a new view that this is a mental universe of which the outward and visible differs only in degree from the inward and invisible. We are beginning to recognise that things are thoughts translated on to the objective plane by the mechanism of the senses: that this vast, mysterious and uncontrollable world—as it has seemed to us—is but the shadow-picture thrown out upon the screen of the senses by a painting in the magic-lantern of each mind.

So little have we been aware of this that, when our picture has displeased us, we have rushed like children to the screen to alter it. We are learning now that the way to change the world is to correct our consciousness of it. If ignorant

thought and feeling have expressed themselves as disease upon the body, it is of no use to try and rub out the effect on the screen, while the cause still holds its place in the lantern slides of the soul. Error within, means error without: Truth within, means Truth without.

So, instead of wishing to withdraw from the world by any form of self-annihilation, the new mystic wishes to remain in it until it has become the full reflection of the Truth within him, until he has realised to the uttermost that God, the Soul, and the World are One.

For two thousand years we have been saying that we are the sons of God, but when it comes to this reading of the Trinity we are convicted of our unbelief; for if the soul should realise itself as the Christ, the son of God, the world, as the reflection of that consciousness, would be the Holy Spirit "Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son."

The body, then, so far from being a hindrance in the search for immediate knowledge of God, the Principle of Life, is, according to this new teaching, essential to the development of the higher order of consciousness, since the body, as the expression or manifestation of the soul, is the final test by which psychical perception of Truth can be distinguished from spiritual realisation.

We may think and feel sublimely and yet our thoughts and emotions may have so little vital action upon the body that it meanwhile may be perishing unknown to us. If soul and body are to be saved from their present imperfect condition by evolving into a new order of knowledge, there must be something more than conscious or intellectual affirmation of Truth and denial of error.

This brings us to the last division of our subject, which for convenience' sake we have classified as the third aspect of American mysticism.

The method of this school for quickening the evolution of man's consciousness is "rich in saving common sense." It does not assume that we can jump suddenly into the new order as soon as our intelligence has awakened to the perception of its truth. While fully admitting the creative power of conscious thought and feeling, it also takes into account those tremendous energies of the sub-conscious mind of which psychology has begun to unfold the wonders. It is well known that miracles of all sorts can be performed by the subliminal self. There is nothing necessarily spiritual in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, curing the halt and maimed, finding wealth for the poor, and attaining to marvellous knowledge of facts and events in past,

present, and future. These things are all within the scope of the psychical consciousness. The spiritual order includes these powers as the greater includes the less, but in and of themselves they are no proof of the divine nature. Jesus Christ pointed this out in his repeated warnings to those who sought him for "signs and wonders." It was his psychical personality, not his spiritual individuality, which attracted them: and it is the Jesus rather than the Christ which still enthralls the world.

How then are we to define the word "spiritual"?

If we put together a few of the scattered definitions we already possess we may get a new meaning.

"God is Spirit."

"God is Love."

"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge."

"The Wisdom that is from above is . . . pure, . . *without variance.*"

"The Father of Lights with whom can be *no variation,* neither shadow that is cast by turning."

"I am God, and *there is none else.*"

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is *One.*"

"The *Unity* of the Spirit."

From these we gather that the spiritual or God-like consciousness is one which knows no reaction, no opposite to itself, no difference, no variableness from its own Eternal or changeless Substance of Perfection. It is that which, having within itself all possibility of variety *in its own kind,* knows no change *from* itself.

Spirit which knows no matter.

Life which knows no death.

Knowledge which knows no ignorance.

Power which knows no weakness.

Holiness which knows no want.

Faith which knows no doubt.

Health which knows no disease.

Love which knows no fear.

Eternal Life, "the *same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever." *This* is the new order of consciousness which it is possible to evolve here and now; this is that "hid treasure" of which it is said "The Kingdom of God is *within* you." "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Many pleasant illusions about ourselves are swept away by this definition of the word "spiritual." It preserves us from ever again mistaking our amiable transcendentalisms of thought and feeling about God for real Knowledge of God.

We begin to see that in order to *know* God,

the Principle of Being which is the Eternal Substance of Existence, we have to get possession of that vast subconscious realm of the mind which is to our present self-consciousness as the whole Atlantic Ocean is to one of the waves on its surface. Any diagram of the cranial brain will give an idea of the magnitude of this unknown universe within us, in which is stored the power accumulated through all the ages of our evolution since the world began. The brain-area representing our conscious life is to the subconscious as the crust of the earth is to its total bulk. We shall *know* God when we have realised Him "with *all* our heart, and with *all* our soul, and with *all* our might," but we are only just discovering the true dimensions of the soul.

Wonderful effects can be got on the plane of the senses by the Will and the Intellect. In fact, the intellectual or personal declaration of Truth will often give much quicker results in healing and in the general control of conditions, than the method practised by the third school of American mysticism, which for this reason is the least popular.

But there is one psychological law often overlooked by those who are impatient for sensible evidence of their power. It is this: the subconscious mind works strictly to the order of the

conscious mind. Whatever self-conscious man decrees, subconscious man fulfils, and fulfils with such unerring exactness that not only the matter, but also the manner of the decree is reproduced. For instance, in dealing with some acute expression of ignorance such as physical disease, we can, if we know no better, emphatically and persistently declare that there is no matter, no body, no disease, no pain. In this way it is possible to inhibit the pain-centres, control the general symptoms, and make ourselves feel well. But all the time the disease may go on working unknown to us, until some day without the least warning, as far as our conscious feeling is concerned, we may find ourselves suddenly removed from the sphere of outward and visible manifestation. Vigorous and prolonged denial of the only consciousness we know at present may be so literally carried out by the subconscious mind, which is responsible for the building and repairing of the physical organism, that we may actually lose our objective existence. Extreme forms of self-suggestion are likely to produce destructive effects because the psychical consciousness is a record of personal and ancestral experience in sense.

For this reason we cannot at first afford to ignore the force of reaction in dealing with our-

selves. It is well to remember that vehement denial of a negative state will tend to aggravate the very error we want to correct.

Another way of treating defective conditions is by using the imagination to create a perfect mental picture in place of the imperfect one presented by the senses, and steadily to hold up this new creation as a model for the subconscious energies to work out.

But the only true and permanent health of "mind, body, and estate"—for poverty is disease of the body of circumstance—must come by developing a consciousness of the Spirit, or unvarying Principle, of Health.

This way seems slow, at first, but it is irrevocably sure; for by it, a man works upward from the very foundation of consciousness, and builds an order of health such as the world has never believed possible, a health which knows no reaction, a health which cannot be destroyed, a *spiritual* health.

Think for a moment of all that has gone to the making of this mysterious Book of Life we call the Body. Think of the aeons of consciousness recorded in every cell, every atom, every monad of this human form, this ever-changing shadow of the soul. Science, which is another name for recovered memory of race experience, has traced

us back through ages of beast, plant, stone and gas, to the incandescent offspring of the sun; primal facts subconsciously preserved in the mythology of every nation, from the Japanese legend of their descent from the Sun-Goddess, to the tradition of the Incas or Sun-Children of Peru. In deed, as well as in truth, we are all the children of light, since earth itself began as a flaming nebula thrown off from the sun.

And during the last half century the physicists have put forward a new theory of matter which resolves it into an etheric form as much finer than the elemental or gaseous, as the gaseous is finer than the mineral.

But the word Spirit is everywhere understood in the sense of its original, *Spiritus,* a breath. If we try to express our conception of Spirit we find ourselves thinking in the very terms which modern scientists use to define the most attenuated form of matter. In fact, the finest material substance now being investigated by science is actually more ethereal, less sensuous, than the elemental breath which represents the popular understanding of the word Spirit. For the gases which compose the atmosphere are now suspected to be dense forms of etheric matter. So, at last, extremes have met, and the long antagonism between these two supposed irreconcilable opposites is beginning to

change into "the Unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace."

It is but the beginning, however, and the new order is not established in a day. We have lived so long in bondage to the "heresy of separateness" which governs the little personal self-consciousness that we are at first bewildered at this vast expansion into a world we never knew we possessed. And for many a day after we have seen the Truth so clearly that the very marrow of our bones has thrilled to the beauty of it, we find ourselves slipping back into the old illusion that the picture without on the screen of the senses is something independent of the mind within which creates it. We have so long looked outward instead of inward for all we have wanted, that we cannot at once realise God and His Whole Creation as *within* us. And yet the evolution of that creation proves the inwardness of God even to the sensuous intelligence which depends upon facts for knowledge. For if we start with physical science at the beginning of the world when it still lay unborn in the heart of the sun, and watch Life the Omnipotent urge it out into space and evolve it through those six great "days" which saw the creation of the etheric, elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, and human orders, we see that all this development

into ever-expanding degrees of consciousness is from within outward.

To-day, on the eve of the Sabbath of Unity, this same Creative Principle of Life which beats the heart within us, is carrying us forward to the seventh or divine order, and is bringing into self-consciousness in us all those ages of experience through which the substance of these bodies has passed since its first state of solar flame.

It is clear then that we have within us the Eternal Spirit, or Principle, of Life. But to come into immediate communion with that Divine Principle of ourselves we have to get to a deeper within-ness than either our personal or our universal consciousness.

And to this end we learn the Science of Silence.

This looks at first so much like the well-known method of the Quietist sect of Europe, and the Yoga discipline of the East, that perhaps only those who have practised all three ways can really appreciate the difference. There is this much of likeness, that the European and Oriental exercises, especially the latter, are a good preparation for the American school.

Two features distinguish the new way of Meditation: extreme simplicity, and the maintenance of a normal physical state. There are no rules such as are laid down in the Jesuit hand-book,

or in the various manuals for students of Raja Yoga. It cannot be learnt from books or from lectures, because it is not of the order of knowledge which can be taught through the senses. After one has gained all that can be conveyed of it in terms of intellectual understanding, one has to begin the real learning with the help of a Master of Silence who, without words, can open the eyes of the soul to the Knowledge which is Eternal Life. Words, as we know them, are of little use. They can only point out the way. The way itself is beyond words. Those who try to find it alone run the risk of falling into one of those many varieties of psychical meditation which have hitherto been mistaken for the spiritual. Any form of meditation which tends to induce trance, ecstasy, exhaustion, excitement, or other abnormal condition of mind or body, is useless for spiritual development. It may be set aside at once as psychic. It is easy enough to get fine feelings and fine thoughts. Half the psychical consciousness is built of them. But the other half is built of mud. In spite of all our idealistic intelligence the old stupidities are with us still. Exaltations and raptures of goodness from which we can tumble back into the degradation of fear, pride, jealousy, anger, spite, prejudice, condemnation, disappointment, discontent, cruelty, avarice,

and all the other varieties of ignorance, are not good enough. We want something better than the virtue which reacts as vice. We want to evolve from within us that spiritual order of Knowledge, and Goodness, and Power with which there is "no variableness, neither shadow that is cast by turning."

In the subconscious memory of each of us there is somewhere a record that once on a time not very long ago in our evolutionary life, as Jews, blinded by a national tradition, we said of One who came out from the Silence to show us the way into our Kingdom, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" "Search and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

To-day, America is hardly a part of our consciousness to which we have looked for *spiritual* enlightenment: but lest we should repeat that earlier blunder, which as Christians we have been repenting for two thousand years, might it not be well for us now to learn all that America can teach us of our still unrealised heaven of Eternal Unity within?

LECTURE II.

Materialism: Man as he Appears to the Senses.
Idealism: Man as he is Imagined by the Soul.
Truth: Man as he is "in the Unity of the Spirit."

"BODY, Soul, and Spirit," is a trinity of words as familiar as the sound of the theological Trinity "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." But if we try to define what we really know of the third term we find ourselves in the position of the Irishman of a certain dinner-party of a few years ago. The word "Spirit" had somehow been tossed for a moment to the surface of general conversation, and one of the guests, a jolly character, who always plunged recklessly into any subject that caught his fancy, picked up the word, looked round the table, and asked suddenly, "*Spirit*? What do you mean by Spirit? *Body* I know, and *Soul* I know, but what in the world is *Spirit*?"

Every *man* present shook his head with a murmur of sympathetic doubt. Every *woman* looked so surprised that the wives stared at their own husbands as if they had never seen them before.

At last the hostess said, "But of course you know what 'Spirit' means: it is . . . it is *God*."

This time there was a murmur of fervent sympathy from the women. Of the men, some stared down at their plates in a shame-faced sort of way as if they felt themselves inferior creatures, and some looked at their hostess with a kindly, quizzical smile as if she had been a child whose ignorance was one of its charms.

The Irishman shook his head more emphatically than ever, and said "Don't know anything about it."

Five years later the women of that party learnt something which made them say to each other, "Those men were right that night: we *don't* know anything about Spirit."

They had been right enough in their definition, "God *is* Spirit." Their mistake had been in believing that their intellectual and emotional consciousness of God was *spiritual*. They had been as much surprised at what they called the men's *materialism* as the men had been amused at their *idealism*. Further enlightenment had shown them that both ways of thinking are equally far from the Truth. Of the two, it is perhaps harder for the idealist to enter the Kingdom of Heaven because he thinks he is already there.

His world of transcendental imagination is so beautiful that he cannot believe it is not real. The materialist, who never confuses dreams with actualities, who never accepts thought and feeling as the equivalent of experience until they have been fulfilled in deed, has at least the advantage of being less subject to illusions about himself. But he, too, is shut out from his Kingdom as long as he is content with what he knows.

It is of course impossible strictly to divide people into these two classes, because everyone alternates between both. When our world is to our liking we are all materialists in being quite ready to enjoy it: when our world is not to our liking we are all idealists in taking refuge from it in one of our own imagination.

Keeping in mind, then, that these two aspects of human consciousness as it is at present, can no more be separated during life than body can be separated from soul, let us begin at the beginning of man in his personal existence.

Here at once we are met by a strange contradiction: for at one moment we are told that "children are an heritage of the Lord," and at another that they are "shapen in iniquity" and "conceived in sin." It is obvious that both statements cannot be equally true. But being dual creatures we have accepted both. Materially, we

have believed and acted upon the first statement: ideally, we have believed and acted upon the second. A mother will thank God for her child with every nerve and pulse of her body, even while her soul may be mourning under a sense of guilt for which she hopes the pangs of childbirth will be a partial expiation. So heavily does the tradition of evil weigh upon sensitive minds, that many an otherwise intelligent woman is driven by its pressure to the length of apologising to her Maker for the existence of herself and her children. In consequence, the child is born as a rule with a perfect body, but with its soul overshadowed by a consciousness of imperfection which is directly or indirectly strengthened from the moment when its baptism makes public acknowledgment of its sinful origin.

Child-study, the most popular branch of Psychology, has shown us that for the first seven years of its life the child is more *sub*-conscious than *self*-conscious; and that during this period it retraces the evolutionary course of the human race just as in its embryonic life it recapitulates the evolution of the orders which preceded Man. In the Girton Gamble Prize Essay for 1906, on the psychological basis of Vagrancy, Mrs. Mary Higgs has pointed out that the intelligence of the child is at first *nomadic*, always restlessly wandering to

some fresh point of interest, until it reaches the *pastoral* stage of fastening upon such things as attract its attention more than others. After a time of collecting and moving about with these objects, the child settles into a sense of static property and shows all the accompanying signs of interest in open-air life, care of land and animals, curiosity about natural laws, traffic by barter, response to the suggestions of environment, and appreciation of communal rights, which mark the *agricultural* phase of man's development. A little later, if it be well-born in the scientific sense, it passes on into the mechanical or *industrial* stage, with the appropriate features of invention, organisation, competition, love of trade, of money, and of towns, and a jealous sense of the rights of the individual. Later still it begins to reflect the moral, aesthetic, and intellectual characteristics of patriotic and *social* evolution. When we add to these facts the equally well-known one of the intense susceptibility of the subconscious mind, we must more than ever admire the shrewd wisdom of the Jesuit maxim: "Give me a child for the first seven years of his life, and you may do what you like with him afterwards; he will always be a Jesuit." Necessarily, since it is the race-consciousness of the child which has been moulded during those seven years.

By the time the child begins to realise his own personality or self-consciousness, he has had his sinfulness, or imperfection, thoroughly impressed upon him. He has been made the scapegoat of the race. He has suffered for the sins of his fathers for countless generations. He has in very fact borne the burden of the world's iniquity. He has not known it: his elders have not known it. When we correct some uncouthness in a child we do not realise that we are dealing with the cave-man in his consciousness, and in our own. If we did realise it, we should often choose another method of correction. Our attitude toward the child changes when we recognise that he is an epitome of race experience. We do not, therefore, cease our efforts to educate his power to control that experience. He has still to learn, at times painfully, that he is master of all those earlier stages of consciousness, and as master is responsible for the behaviour of his servant. But we do cease to blame him for the mistakes he makes during his experiments with the latent forces of his nature: we do entirely relieve him of that intolerable sense of condemnation which takes the heart out of life and drives many a young creature to desperation.

At this moment, however, we are not concerned with our objective relation to the child: we have

first to find the truth of our subjective relation to it; the rest will follow of itself.

We find as life quickens us from the impersonal subconsciousness of childhood into the personal self-consciousness of youth and adolescence, that the new world of the senses seems very real to us after the dim borderland we have left behind. Far from suspecting that we have but passed from one dream into another, we think we have at last awakened to a solid world of fact which feels the more substantial for its contrast to the realm of our childish fancy. Enchanted by the endless variety of our new estate, we set to work to enjoy it by accumulating facts as fast as we can, under the naïve impression that if only we can pile up enough of them we shall attain to knowledge, and from that to wisdom—wisdom being generally understood as an essence distilled by character from knowledge or experience of facts. But before we have been long at this game we discover that we are playing the fool, for never by any possibility can we even collect, much less experience, all the facts that exist; and even if we could, there is the last fact of death waiting at the end to rob us of our hoarded treasure. The disproportion between desire of any kind, and its satisfaction, becomes so great that after a time the most materialistic temperament is convinced

that there must be something better somewhere than the world of facts as apprehended by the senses.

Thus, half aroused, and mysteriously impelled by the Life Principle within us, we move forward yet another step, and again, as we come into possession of a still more wonderful dream-world, we suffer the illusion of thinking that we have at last and indeed awakened. For now we are come into the great Shadow-Land of the Soul, where Ideals of Truth have such an enthralling semblance of power that but for the Unknown Reality irresistibly urging us on, we might stay spell-bound forever by their charm. Here, death itself can be cheated, and Heaven so cunningly feigned that only those who had had a glimpse of the real could detect the imitation. A man can make for himself such a home in this counterfeit world of the imagination, can so habitually dwell there with ideal companions upon whom he depends for all his intimate delight and inspiration, that he can live in the body as if he were out of it, and do his duty in the world of the senses with as much detachment as if he were a monk in his cell.

This fictitious world of Idealism easily fascinates the most highly evolved of the race, inasmuch as it represents the best that humanity has yet

achieved. Into it have gone the noblest energies of mind and heart. Its heights and depths can be guessed at by remembering that just as the body of each man keeps the memory of all action since the beginning of the world, so the soul of each man keeps the record of all thought, all feeling, from the dawn of consciousness in the earliest form of life.

And when we recall the great names of the past of all lands and realise what their genius has meant in human evolution, it cannot be surprising that the men and women of to-day who find their loftiest joy in intellectual and emotional communion with such souls should call that experience *spiritual*.

Under the shock of disillusionment with the world of facts, of things *made*, we, naturally enough, suppose that the world of ideas is the only reality. For in comparison with the short-lived pains and pleasures of the senses which make up the " perpetual flux " of the outward and visible universe, this inward and invisible life seems sacred, enduring, and immortal.

It never occurs to us that we are living in a ghostly world of the dead, gazing Narcissus-like into the pool of our cosmic consciousness, transfixed with the beauty of our own past. We never suspect for an instant that this ideal world of

poetry, art, romance, philosophy, science, history, religion, is as much a world of the *senses* as the commonest fact of everyday experience. We forget that all this treasure of exalted thought and emotion has come to man through the lowly channels of daily life in a flesh and blood body which we are sometimes inclined to call "common and unclean."

It was necessary that we should for a little while revolt against the body as an enemy to the soul. Unless for a few thousand years we had suffered the overwhelming nightmare of sin, we could hardly have evolved that magnanimity which consists in *forgiving one's self.*

As animals proper we have no sense of sin or imperfection other than physical want. The most persistent sense of defect in the animal consciousness is hunger. As domestic animals we move on a step by receiving and reflecting in a more or less shadowy way the suggestion of guilt impressed upon us by the higher or human animal to whom we are attached. This creature in turn has his evolution quickened by the perception of his difference from others of his kind who are a degree or two more highly developed. Thus we go on until we reach the stage of idealism in which our sense of imperfection is in proportion to the perfection we see in those sages, saints and saviours whose

imagined presence or absence makes our Purgatory or our Heaven.

Our illusion of separateness and difference from these holy ones is intense enough to make us believe that never while we are imprisoned in the flesh shall we be able to share as equals in their exalted state; and since such bliss is only to be realised after death we have now to live in constant recollection and anticipation.

This alone would prove the unspirituality of Idealism. To the spiritual consciousness, complete, whole, holy in itself, there is neither past nor future, neither looking backward nor looking forward. Time and space are imaginary limitations of the Soul: Spirit knows only the Eternal Now.

The idealist can often escape for a while from the sense of sin by looking at it intellectually as a factor in human evolution. This scientific attitude is a merciful anodyne when sin has become excruciating to the emotions and the body in consequence is bearing the brunt of the torture. It is, however, but a temporary expedient by which Life soothes and steadies the soul in the intervals of its struggle toward Knowledge.

A hint of more lasting comfort comes to us when we begin to see that our highest ideal is but a projection of our own consciousness: that

the outer world of things, and the inner world of thoughts are pictures thrown forward by the Creative Life within us in order to bring us out into a full and perfect *self*-consciousness.

In our materialist moods this way of looking at the universe repels us as a gigantic egotism: in our idealist moods it attracts us as the ultimate of altruism.

> "For now I am grown nothing, being All.
> And the whole world weighs down upon my heart."

We need not trouble about it either way, for it will be left behind us with all the other contradictions of the psychical state as we evolve into Unity. We do but gain possession of our larger world in order to renounce it. From the personal we expand into the Universal and for a time mistake it for the Eternal: but as surely as we outgrow the illusion of the personal self, so surely do we outgrow the illusion of the cosmic self. All its wonders—of which perhaps the most wonderful is the power of "Infinite Vision" as explained by the Buddhist priests—consist in an immense expansion of the senses through subjective relation to the race consciousness; and as such they are no more spiritual than the everyday perceptions of our average intelligence.

Yet it comes as a surprise to learn that even at such a height we are still on the plane of the

psychical, still in the shadowland of the soul. For these powers represent the utmost limit of our imagination, and beyond them we can see nothing.

So, when the Life Principle within us stirs once more to unfold us into a new order of consciousness, we shrink back from the prospect before us as from a gulf of darkness which swallows up all we know, all we love, all that makes our life worth living. We have come at last to the edge of our dream-world, and the awakening seems like a jumping-off into the "formless void." When we have made the plunge, however, and given ourselves up for lost, we find as we slowly open our eyes in what we thought was utter darkness, that we have leaped into a "fathomless abyss" of Light.

To some the change comes so gradually, so gently, that it is like a painless birth rather than a violent death, but to a "rank" idealist who has lived intensely in the world of imagination and whose senses are proportionately developed, the process of transition is not always easy. It cannot in any case be sudden for the obvious reason that man as we know him would cease to exist if his present consciousness were to be all at once replaced by one of an entirely new order.

We have to evolve the Truth of ourselves from

within, where it has been, is, and ever will be, in the Eternal Perfection of our original creation.

"Man as he *is*, is God's idea of Himself,
Man as he *appears*, is man's idea of himself."

Since God created Man in His Own Image and after His Own Likeness, Original Man must be the Manifestation of Perfection. But this real nature of his does not yet appear, because its *appearance* depends upon his evolution into the knowledge of his divine origin.

And has he not always known that he is the son of God? He has *thought* it, more or less, but he has never yet *known* it. To *know* is something infinitely greater than to *think*, as we think. We have seen but the psychical shadow of Knowledge.

But have we not known the Christ? No. We have seen Jesus, the psychical shadow of the Christ; but to know the Christ we must evolve into the order of the Christ, or Spiritual Consciousness. We must *be* the Christ, to *know* the Christ.

The very men who lived intimately with Jesus for three years did not know the Christ, or Spirit, of Him. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto

you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me."

But the trouble was that they had never really seen *Him*. We see without us just so much as we have perceived within us: and to know the Christ we must discover the Divine Original of ourselves in that silent within which is deeper than all our thoughts, feelings, imaginations, and experiences.

The world of sensible appearances depends upon the world of thought and feeling: but our psychical world is itself a world of appearances—mere shadows of race experience. How then can the Christ, or reality, of us appear while our inspiration is derived from the senses? How much should we know of the Christ if the historic record—the sensible appearance—of the life of Jesus had never been written?

Sweep away our memories of Christianity; destroy the Scriptures of every country; blot out from our minds the figures of the world's great teachers; imagine a blank in those vast areas of the soul now filled by the presences of Jesus and His disciples, of Krishna, Gautama Buddha, Lao Tzu, and all the other Masters. What is left? There is left within us that Principle of Being from which all these came forth; and if we *know* our

Principle we can create for ourselves all that ever has been, all that ever will be.

Is it any wonder that knowing His Principle, Jesus said of the world of appearance, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up?" If we will learn how to think and feel by inspiration of our Cause instead of taking our inspiration from the world of effects, we too can raise up a new body, a new and true manifestation of ourselves.

God is the Creator of the world of reality : man is the maker of the world of appearance. Principle has created us perfect : we have to realise that perfection in the outward world of manifestation. Our world at present reflects our ignorant idea of ourselves, the idea we have evolved out of our race experience. For ages we have been coming into a consciousness of power over our surroundings, and the civilisation of to-day proves that in comparison with the time when primitive man first tamed primitive dog, we have almost wakened up enough to remember that we "have dominion over every living thing upon the earth."

But we are not yet quite awake. There seem to be still a few rebellious "living things." Evidently we have not learnt the whole secret of dominion. War and Pestilence still exist to remind us that we have not yet outgrown the violence and fear which we have inherited from our animal

ancestry. But we are on the way to wisdom when we see that anxious and violent efforts to repress War and Pestilence tend to reproduce these unintelligent conditions.

We find then that there is after all a semblance of Truth in our popular superstition about sin. We cannot honestly deny that we are imperfect as we know ourselves at present. To judge by appearances—which we know is not "righteous judgment"—we are "born in sin," inasmuch as our consciousness is defective or wanting in completeness, wholeness, or holiness. We are but *partially* conscious of ourselves, *i.e.*, we know only the side of our nature which is *fact*, the side *made* "out of the dust of the ground" through race experience.

Sin, therefore, is a *fact* about us, but it is not the *truth* of us. When Truth and fact are one, we shall have realised that Being and Existence are one, and God will then be manifest in Man. This duality is clearly expressed in the first and second chapters of Genesis, where the original *creation* of man in the image and after the likeness of God is distinct from the subsequent *making* of man out of the elements. First, God created Man as a duplicate of His own Eternally Perfect Consciousness, the Father begot the Son Who is "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of

His person" ; second, that Divine Man, or Son, as the Lord God "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul." That one verse contains the entire history of evolution —God breathing Himself out into manifestation ; the Spirit of Life incarnating Itself in that visible form of Its Own Substance which we have called "matter."

We have recognised ourselves as "dust of the ground," and as "living soul"; we have yet to know ourselves as the outgoing Breath of God-Consciousness, or Spirit of Eternal Life, which daily forms our bodies out of the dust of the ground in the food we eat, and the air we breathe.

As a step toward that new knowledge of ourselves we first make friends with our old enemy the body ; for as long as soul and body are at war there is little chance of realising the Spirit of Unity. Our eyes will be quicker to see the world as a mental substance if we feel that our bodies are the outside of our souls. There is no other difference between them. The soul is not like a sea-gull in a hen-coop as sentimental fancy would make believe. It would be far nearer the truth to say that body is to soul as wings are to a sea-gull—the very expression of its life ; for probably most of us in thinking of a sea-gull

picture strong wings in flight. It is well that we should not have come to this reading of the body until we had exchanged our Pagan ideal of beauty of form for the Christian ideal of beauty of character, or we might have made some short-sighted blunders in thinking that a crooked soul was hidden under every hunchback, and that every pretty face meant goodness. The form of the body represents an aspect of race-consciousness, its expression represents the personality. The physical beauty or ugliness of a face therefore may be an inheritance from the race-soul to which the character of the owner may have no direct relation. This view of the body will prevent us from being easily deceived by either the superficial satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the senses. And later, as the original Truth of our own souls begins to glimmer up through the palimpsest of race experience, we shall learn to recognise it also as the real substance of every other soul, and the long tale of evolutionary struggle which at times has seemed so terrible and so endless, will come to be "as yesterday when it is past." The value of remembering all our "dust-of-the ground" experience is that it saves us from impatience and disappointment while we are shifting the base of our consciousness from the psychical to the spiritual. It sayes us from those difficulties which come from

trying to take "a short cut": it keeps us from the error of confusing Being with Existence. God and Man are forever One, but God is never Man, and Man is never God. "I can of mine own self do nothing: the Father that dwelleth within me, He doeth the works," is the witness of the Christ or Ultimate Man, and the whole story of his evolution is an echo of that witness.

Our intellect may perceive clearly enough that the human trinity of Spirit, Soul, and Body corresponds to the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but that perception will not suddenly change our soul into a Christ.

We do not jump to the conclusion that we can realise our spiritual origin by repeating "I am Spirit," as if that were true of our personal self-consciousness and our universal subconsciousness. When we have quite forgiven our old enemy the body, and are at one with it "in love and charity," we then begin to come into union with the Spirit within us by realising that the soul of itself can do nothing. As the elemental breath is to the body, so that indwelling Spirit, or breath of God-Consciousness, is to the soul. In It "we live and move, and have our being," and by full and perfect union with It, "all power is given unto us in heaven (within) and in earth (without)."

If we now turn from the mystical and poetic language of religion and metaphysics, and look at man as he might appear to an agnostic student of science, we get a fresh illumination upon his nature.

From physiology, and practical experience of our own bodies, we find that man is at the least a piece of beautiful mechanism, a wonderful expression of the Principle of Proportion.

From psychology, and practical experience of our own minds, we find that man has a mental organism which expresses in still more intricate and subtle degrees this same Principle of Proportion.

And we also find that in everything we do, from making a pudding, or a pinafore, to building a battleship, or composing a symphony, we are always dependent upon this Principle. We can do nothing right without it. Nor can we even do wrong without it. We must use the Principle of Construction to bring about destruction. The experimental chemist must use the Principle of his science even to blow himself up.

Further, we observe that however much we may doubt our knowledge of the Principle of our arts, crafts and sciences, we never doubt the Principle Itself. On the contrary, when we have misapplied it, we acknowledge our ignorance by going back to it to learn more about it before we

tackle our problem again. We shunt the problem for the time, forget our failure, and fix our whole attention upon the Principle. We brood over it, steep our minds in it, give ourselves up to it entirely until we have got a better understanding of it. Then we proceed to test our knowledge by putting it into our work.

The further we go in our study of man in his innumerable ways of expressing himself, the more clearly we see that at every moment of his existence he is relying upon an innate and unvarying Principle of Rightness with which his mind must be to some degree in conscious and harmonious relation before he can succeed in any of his activities.

This Principle of Proportion inherent in all consciousness—think, for instance, of the exquisite proportions of a crystal—is at work in our bodies long before we know it, building up a perfect organism for the self-conscious existence which begins with the child's first breath. And while life lasts we never lose it. We may forget it, disregard it, rebel against it times without number; we may go mad for want of it in our thoughts and feelings; but still it will keep the heart beating, the lungs breathing, the subconscious energies working to save us from the destruction which our ignorance would so often

bring upon us but for its infinite care. It is the Principle of Life Itself, the foundation of Existence.

Platonic mathematicians in their enthusiasm at the power and beauty of their Principle, cried "God geometrises!" and the world of poetry and science since has treasured the two words as summing up the whole truth of creation.

If then this Principle of Perfection is equally in us all, why do we appear to differ so widely from each other? We have seen that the history of evolution as we know it, consists in the Principle of Life expanding by degrees into full and perfect self-conscious manifestation. *In the average man,* self-consciousness is mainly personal and objective. *In the genius,* this personal and objective self-consciousness is enriched by subjective relation to the race experience in the subconscious mind. *In the prophet, the sage, the seer,* the personal consciousness and the recovered race memories are still further expanded by inspirations direct from the Principle. *In the Christ or Ultimate Man,* the personal and the universal consciousness are in complete self-conscious union with the Principle.

This gives us a scientific equivalent for the religious phrase which describes the Christ as "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." For the Ultimate Man is he who,

having realised to the uttermost in his own body and soul the personal and the universal consciousness of imperfection, bears away that sinfulness by coming into Unity with the Eternal Principle of All Knowledge, which is *Wholeness*.

Evolution itself belongs to the kindergarten of the senses, through which the Spiritual and changeless Substance of Being and Existence is apprehended in terms of psychical illusion such as Time, Space, and the process of Becoming.

But this perception, which is so clear to the intellect, is far less easily realised by the emotions. Hence discrepancies in conduct which are often comic to our friends and tragic to ourselves. We see plainly enough that we are spiritual and perfect in our true nature, but the contradiction between what we *perceive* we are, and what we *feel* we are—the old quarrel between Reality and Appearance—is so sharp, that the crying need in everybody's life is to know some way of realising Unity.

Our "beautiful enemy" the body will revenge itself for all the scorn heaped upon it in the days of our asceticism by helping us now in our need.

American physiologists tell us that the central nerve plexus of the ganglionic system, technically known as the pre-vertebral, epigastric or solar plexus, is a brain of far higher order than the

cranial or cerebro-spinal brain. This "vital brain," as it is appropriately called, controls the whole sympathetic system, and is responsible for the building and maintenance of the body. It is the organ of that subconscious or race intelligence through which the Principle of Creation makes ready for the child a perfect medium for the expression of its objective and self-conscious life. The vital or primary brain is to the cranial or secondary brain as the race is to the individual, or as the sun is to the moon. That is to say, we have within us the organ of an intelligence infinitely greater than the one we know as our own, and this intelligence not only made our bodies for us before we came into objective existence, but is daily and hourly repairing, sustaining and protecting that body against the ravages of our ignorant use of it. Just as the superficial area of our cerebro-spinal brain keeps the record of our personal experience, so this central or vital brain, of which the mysterious powers were long ago suspected by ancient and mediaeval mysticism, keeps the record of universal experience since the beginning of the world. And as we learn to come into possession of its accumulated treasure of knowledge and power, the great, unused, and unknown depths of our cranial brain awake, and the cosmic mind becomes self-conscious in us.

With such riches to be had for the seeking, is it strange that masters in interpretation bid us look *within* for all we want?

Men and things are indispensable to us while we are in the rudimentary stage of learning, but sooner or later we come to a moment in our evolution when we see that we must get a different kind of knowledge from any which is to be learnt in the usual ways. We see that we must find within ourselves the Original Substance or Spirit of Knowledge out of which has come all that has ever been known. Until we have found out how to live consciously in immediate relation with that Principle, we *know* nothing. All the reading and thinking in the world will only give us an imitation of knowledge, a derived and second-hand acquaintance with race memories. True Knowledge must come by direct inspiration from the Spirit of Knowledge.

Therefore we have to learn how to use this vital brain or subconscious mind within us, through which our Principle directly works. When once we have control of it we are independent of books and teachers. But to learn the right use of it we must give as much time and trouble as we should cheerfully devote to studying any other new art or science. We cannot learn it by reading or by listening to talk about it, any more than we can

learn music in that way. From these means we get a general notion of how to start our self-development, but when we have practised a little while we find that we are glad to take the best help we can get. It is mere intellectual pride to say to ourselves, "Why go to a Master, if all this knowledge is within us?" Music is equally within us. We do not go to a music-master to have music put into us: we go to have our innate music educated or drawn out of us by one who has already come into conscious possession of the music within himself. We have taken great pains to learn how to use our Constructive Principle in all the objective ways which make up the business of life: we have now to take a little trouble to learn how to apply it to the re-construction of our own defective consciousness.

The question of learning from a Master troubles many minds in the early stages of this new teaching. But if we remember that the outer world is the picture of our consciousness, we shall see that a master merely represents a phase of ourselves which we have not yet realised. One who appears to know more than we do is simply a picture to us of something still latent in ourselves. Unless it were within us we could not even see it without. It would mean nothing to us because there would be no correspondence to

it in our consciousness by which we could recognise it. Pascal illustrated this when he imagined God saying to the soul: "Tu ne me chercherais pas si tu ne m'avait déjà trouvé."

Of course it is always possible that we may fail to recognise a picture of ourselves which represents something so deeply latent in us that there is no response to it in our *self*-consciousness. This would account for the rejection of Jesus Christ by those who had not yet evolved far enough to recognise Him ever so dimly as the Truth of themselves. Their very bodies were a witness that the Principle of Rightness was within them: but for it they could not have drawn the breath to denounce Him: but it was too far within for even His likeness of it to call it out into their minds.

It is always true to say of our Principle: "Closer is *It* than breathing, nearer than hands and feet"; but unless we *know* It, Its nearness will not prevent us from trying in our ignorance to destroy Its manifestation. The depth of Its latency can be gauged by remembering that only in one man has It come completely to the surface. The culminating difference between Jesus Christ and the other great Masters is that He demonstrated His spiritual or eternal consciousness in the resurrection of the body, thus making of the human trinity a Divine Unity.

If then we find it necessary to learn from a master of music how to draw upon the immense musical experience stored in the race-consciousness, how much more necessary must it be to learn from a Master of Silence how to reach that Principle of Being of which the race-mind holds but a single perfect memory?

From embryology and psychology we know that the Creative Principle functions directly through the subjective mind of the vital brain, but the history of mysticism tells us that we have already been wandering for ages in its labyrinths of race consciousness under the illusion that its wonders were spiritual. We know, therefore, that in order to come into immediate knowledge of our Principle we have to find a deeper region of the subjective mind than we have hitherto explored, a region beyond all known thought and feeling, a region of Silence. Obviously, if there are any who have found the way into this Silence, it will be well to let them pilot us until we know the way for ourselves.

From the psychology of the child we have learnt:

1. That for the seven earliest years of our life we are more subconscious than self-conscious, more subjective than objective.

2. That the subjective mind is intensely receptive to suggestion.

3. That it responds more quickly to inward than to outward forms of suggestion.

We know that a child responds less to what we say and do to it than to what we think and feel about it. Nervous tension in children is due to the psychical contradiction between the souls and bodies of those about them. And their precocious sayings are no longer surprising when we remember that they are subconsciously aware of all that is taking place in the minds of those with whom they live, and that they naturally reflect the unspoken ideas and emotions of the elders to whom they are most nearly related.

After fifty years of psychological experiment we are beginning to recognise the power of silent mental suggestion, and to apply that power to the conduct of life. But a few have already gone further than this, and have discovered an order of silence more powerful than any form of mental suggestion. These do not affect the soul by means of any thought, feeling, or action; but by the law of Unity which tends to lift all minds to an equal level of enlightenment, they are able to bring those who are in *sub*conscious sympathy with them, into union with the Spirit or Principle of Life which is One in us all.

Long ago we were given the key to our Kingdom of Eternal Consciousness when we were told

that we could not enter into it unless we became "as little children."

Since then we have gone to school to learn the nature of the child. Psychology has taken it as an object lesson, has focussed attention upon it, and has shown us that to be like it we must be subconsciously receptive rather than intellectually curious.

The facts of science have as usual echoed and confirmed the intuitions of religion. Psychology has given us a scientific explanation of the well-remembered warning:

"Except ye be converted, and *become as little children,* ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

LECTURE III.

Consciousness: the Personal, the Universal, the Eternal. Self-Denial, and the Regeneration of Consciousness. Health and Immortality.

CONSCIOUSNESS is a peace-making word. It heals the breach between the monists who think that there is but one Substance, Spirit, in infinitely varying degrees of manifestation, and the dualists who think that Spirit and Matter are distinct and separate in kind, and who feel that of the two Matter is the more substantial. These opposites begin to harmonise when the universe is apprehended as the representation of ever fluent and changeable states of consciousness.

What the universe really is in itself we do not yet know. From the evidence of the senses, we reason that it is the product of an Intelligence which we diligently imitate in all our work: and from "the evidence of things not seen," from Faith, the sublimest form of imagination, we learn that it is the image and likeness of an Eternal or Changeless Principle of Perfection.

At present, however, our world reflects the imperfect human consciousness which is apparent

rather than the perfect God-consciousness which is latent in us. Our self-consciousness stands between us and reality.

Ancient Eastern mysticism sought to solve this difficulty by saying "Destroy self-consciousness": modern Western mysticism seeks the solution in the words, "I came not to destroy but to fulfil."

Not destruction, but fulfilment, completeness, wholeness, is what we all want. But we seek it from without. We make ourselves ideal or actual homes, families, friends, careers; we busy ourselves with all manner of things; we distract our attention with every variety of work and play, and beguile ourselves into a belief that we are living what we naïvely call "an all-round life." Is it "all-round"? Is it complete? If we are temporarily under that illusion, so much the worse for us. We are then like the rich young man who "went away grieved" from the only thing worth having because "he had great possessions." When, in our idealism, we renounce the obvious riches of money and the outward satisfaction of the senses, we forget that we are laying up another and far more enthralling kind of treasure in the riches with which we store our minds. We have learnt to smile gently at that early picture of ourselves as "a certain rich man" whose "ground brought forth plentifully," and

who "thought within himself, saying. . . . . I will pull down my barns and build greater: and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods," but what else are we doing still when we spend our lives in adding to the barns of race experience in the ignorance which we call knowledge?

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!"

What are the "riches" of to-day?

Twenty centuries ago we worshipped material wealth as the force which moved the Roman armies. To-day we worship the ideal wealth of intellectual and aesthetic power. We hail the Caesars of Art and Science. We covet mental distinction. Few of us would choose to be a Beit or a Vanderbilt rather than a Wagner, a Watts, or a Browning.

Our "great possessions" are the recovered race memories which enrich the psychical consciousness developed in us by two thousand years of such Christianity as we have been able to understand. Impelled now by that Principle of Being within which is ever pushing us on toward the fulfilment of a complete and perfect consciousness of Itself, we are re-considering those sayings of the Christ which from long and constant use have become almost "obscured by the mist of familiarity."

We have already learnt that to enter the Kingdom of Knowledge in which is no opposite of ignorance, we must exchange our intellectual busyness about the world of facts and effects, for a child-like or subjective receptivity to the Spirit or Principle of Truth within: and a further clue to this Kingdom is given in the sayings about the rich and the poor. We are told that the "poor in spirit" are "blessed" for "theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Our reading of poverty has been almost as literal and unimaginative as our reading of self-denial, which we have taken to mean doing the things we did not like. If we honestly and strictly enquire of ourselves what constitutes the "riches" we are to give up, the "life" we are to lose, the "self" we are to deny as the condition of entering into our Kingdom, we shall come upon a depth of meaning in these well-worn phrases which will prevent us from ever again being content with our old rudimentary explanation.

It is evident that these three figures of speech all refer to the personal consciousenss. But we have seen that as man evolves from the average range of intelligence into the wider sphere of the genius and the sage, his personal consciousness expands into the race consciousness of universal experience. The "life" which the genius would have to "lose," the "self" which he would have

to "deny" before he could enter into his Kingdom of Eternal Consciousness would be incomparably richer than that of the less developed man.

It is worth while to notice that the same law runs through all the stages of our evolution. The genius attains his larger self-consciousness by denial of the lesser self. The young musician, poet, painter, statesman, has all the weaknesses of the average man, but he puts them aside when they threaten to stand in the way of his development. Deliberately and steadily he sacrifices the comforts, pleasures and advantages—even the ideals—which other men think important. A moment's recollection of the great names in any period of the world's history is enough to convince us that self-denial was the secret of their greatness.

We are on the eve of a better order of things as soon as we discover that what we have is not good enough. The genius knows in every fibre of him that he could never be content with the life of the average man. He must let the life within him find its own way out, and do what it will with his personality. He does not waste his energies upon the world's opinion of him while he is in the making. People, then, may think and say he is a failure. What is that to him?

At worst they can but reflect the silly things he feels about himself when he sinks to the average level of judging by appearance. What has he to do with failure when "he knows *within* him what he knows"? We find this same temper of indifference to all that represents the old self-consciousness in those who are evolving into the new order. For them, as for the genius, self-denial means turning away from that which is no longer good enough. They cannot be contented with any second-best. They will have the Perfect, and none else.

The Eclecticism of Epicurus was an attempt in this direction, and the interpretation given to that philosophy by Walter Pater, has revived it into one of the strongest influences of present-day idealism. But, even at its strictest, it is so imperfect a form of self-denial that instead of regenerating the personal consciousness it merely disguises it in all the borrowed splendours of the race inheritance.

To have at one's command the best that the world has produced: to build a Palace of Art for one's self, and dwell habitually in it with the great ones of the earth, thinking their thoughts, sharing in their emotions, seeing all objective existence through their eyes: is that poverty?

Can any idealist suppose for a moment that he

knows what it is to be "poor in spirit"? The spirit or essence of poverty must be the extreme of want, an emptiness, a blank swept bare even of our memories and our dreams.

But what is our "life"? What is our "self" as we know it at this moment? Does it not consist in thought, feeling, action and appearance? Those four words roughly cover the within and without of our consciousness. And since the within includes the without, we need not concern ourselves directly with action and appearance. The visible results of our mental and emotional energies follow automatically of themselves.

Our consciousness then as we know it, is made up of thought and feeling. And thought depends upon feeling. The child feels long before it thinks. Feeling is the raw material of thought. When we think, we shape or form our feeling. Thought is to feeling as body is to soul, as the objective is to the subjective. The cranial, or secondary brain is the organ of thought: the primary or vital brain is the organ of feeling. We manage to live half our lives quite happily without thinking: we could not exist for an instant without feeling. In normal sleep the cranial brain stops working: if the vital brain were to stop we should never wake. "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

So, our life, our self, when we track it down to its essential element turns out to be feeling. Personality, stated in its simplest terms, is a particular way of feeling.

And how has this personal consciousness been made? If we know how anything has been made, we know how to re-make it. And if we see that a thing has been made wrong, there must also be somewhere in our consciousness the perception of what the thing would be if it were right. We have become acutely aware that our consciousness is wrong. The first toothache tells us that. And we have an ideal, founded upon the dream of one of the greatest mystics the race has ever known, of a perfect state in which all defects of consciousness will be made whole. In that dream of "a new heaven and a new earth," "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." "He that overcometh shall inherit these things; . . . but the fearful and unbelieving . . . shall have their part in . . . the second death"

If "all things are possible to him that believeth," why postpone this perfect state to some remote and unknown other world?

If a man's house is burnt down he does not wander homeless for the rest of his days con-

soling himself with the dream of possessing hereafter "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." On the contrary, he sets to work to build himself a better house—with fire-proof floors.

There is nothing we cannot overcome if we will take the trouble to learn how to do it. Has man got anything yet without effort? Has he ever made a single conquest except through "an infinite capacity for taking pains"? When man makes up his mind to do a thing he can do it, because there is God behind him.

We know well enough what our consciousness is at present: and we have some idea of what we want it to be. We know it is imperfect: we want it to be perfect. And we are no longer content to make shift with the hope of a future perfection: we want it now. Idealism, which diverts our attention from present misery by the mirage of past or future comfort, is no longer good enough. We recognise it at last for what it is—a mental opium-eating.

How then shall we set to work to build a new consciousness of ourselves as we are "in Spirit and in Truth"? We have on our hands at this moment an accumulation of personal and universal feeling which bears evident signs of having been ignorantly built. But, so far, it is all we have

got. It will not do to try to make a clean sweep of it, or we shall sweep ourselves out of existence: there will be nothing left to go on with. We must "lose our life" by degrees. We shall have to "die daily" instead of all at once. Bit by bit we will pull down our old house of consciousness, and bit by bit we will build up in its place the new one. But we must not cling to any of the old stuff. We must be ready to let it all go. The precious heir-looms of cosmic memory with which we have so studiously adorned the galleries of our soul, will come to be counted as "dross" that the new order of knowledge may take their place. We are to be "transformed by the renewing of our minds." Our mental constitution has to be made all over again. Until now, it has been made by desire turned outward: it has to be re-made by desire turned inward.

Hitherto, desire has expessed itself in the reproduction of personal and universal consciousness: it is now turning toward the expression in objective existence of the eternal consciousness.

Life, working through the instinct of self-preservation in the race, uses the personality of the average man and woman to make a third personality which shall reproduce the strongest characteristics of both parents.

In the genius, whose intelligence is more highly

developed than that of the average man, this race instinct for physical reproduction is partly diverted into psychical expression. Hence the arts and sciences.

At a still higher level of intelligence desire is wholly concentrated upon the expression of a spiritual consciousness. Hence the Christ.

So, in our work of self-transformation, desire is our great ally. Instead of shunning and repressing it as a dangerous enemy to be kept loaded with chains in the dungeons of consciousness, we are to use it as engine-drivers use their steam—to get to the destination. Obviously, there is some work to be done in changing our minds about many things. Here at the very beginning of our personal existence, down in the very foundations of our house of life, we shall find heaps of rubbish that will have to go. We shall be eager enough to get rid of the negative feelings—the lumber of condemnation and shame and fear—but what about the idealisations? Shall we be so eager to clear away the poetics, the beautiful sentiments, the romance of sex? Will our hearts begin to harden, will our minds begin to clench, will our very flesh rebel when we begin to suspect that the exaltation of physical motherhood, which has been as a beacon light guiding us on through the dark of our long journey upward from the brute,

was but an expedient by which the evolving soul of man strengthened itself to hold its own against the ape and tiger in his blood?

And all the subsequent exaggerations of psychical consciousness which has made it possible for us to mistake it for the spiritual, and to idolise the genius as if he were divine—how shall we feel about letting that go? It is not altogether pleasant to have one's house pulled down about one's ears. Transitional states of consciousness are uncomfortable. Babies do a little wailing before they get used to their new world; and it is not only at our first birth that we feel lost.

Desire, then, at its source, is Life Itself seeking manifestation. We decide the form of Its manifestation. The mystery of the Incarnation is that man limits God's expression of Himself. Life the Eternal condescends to work through the low, slow channel of evolution. As man evolves into knowledge of his Divine Principle, the expression of desire rises from the physical order of manifestation, to the psychical, and thence upward again to the order of the spiritual. And in the process of this resurrection both body and soul are regenerated. We know that development comes by resistance. The law of evolution is "the survival of the fittest." The psychical consciousness develops by overcoming the physical, and the

spiritual consciousness in turn develops by overcoming the psychical. Thus, we have against us the full force of the race-consciousness. We have to transmute both the personal and the universal way of feeling. Instead of drifting along the line of least resistance, following in the wake of our ancestors, we have to turn the immense emotional energy developed by them, into a new direction.

At present the race-mind is our master: it dictates, we obey. We have to make it our servant: and the strength we have to put forth to make it change places with us, is a measure of the service it will render. This will not seem so formidable an undertaking when we realise that the past has no power over us unless we allow it. Neither the immediate experience which we call our own because it is nearer the surface of our minds, nor that remote experience which we call the race-consciousness in us because it represents our memory of evolution, has of itself any real power or substance. Our past consists of our experiments with our Principle, and, since it bristles with examples of how *not* to use It, the less we pore over that record the better. The mistakes we have made are all registered in our subconsciousness: we need not be afraid of forgetting them.

The genius in physical science never concerns

himself with his failures: he knows that that would be the surest method of repeating them: he applies his mind instead to the Principle with which he is working, and goes on casting behind him each faulty experiment until he gets his success. So, in re-making our consciousness day by day, we shall *take no suggestion from our past.* It is not good enough. We have to learn how to live in the innermost perfection of the moment as it *is* in the Eternal, not as it *appears* to be through any deflecting medium of an imaginary past or future.

To cut ourselves off from the only past we know is a form of self-denial which leaves us very poor. For as yet we do not know our real past: we have but remembered our experience in sense. The truth of our past, as of our future, will dawn on us when we learn the truth of the present.

Our evolutionary experience being all that we possess, we have naturally mistaken it for reality, and have turned to it for inspiration.

In our religious life we have supposed that we were in direct relation or communion with God. But as self-conscious intelligence develops we become aware that our idea of God has evolved, like all our other ideas, through our "dust-of-the-ground" experience. Our conception of God stands between us and God as He is "in Spirit

and in Truth." If we grant that our consciousness is at present imperfect, we must own that our thought and feeling about God is also imperfect, and as such is subject to change and improvement. Instead, therefore, of clinging to any of our old definitions of God and the Universe we should regard them gratefully as temporary shelters useful for us until our new house of consciousness is far enough advanced for us to feel at home in it. And if the illusion of time should now and then deceive us into thinking that the walls of our new dwelling rise but slowly, we will remember that we are building for the race. For each man is an epitome of the whole creation, and as he rebuilds his consciousness, he re-makes the consciousness of the world. This is comfort for those first bewildering hours when the deep-seated "heresy of separateness" tempts us to think that this new mysticism is a selfish disregard for the salvation of any soul but one's own. Our pathetic faith in the evidence of the senses so blinds us that we do not see the real world: we see the reflection of our consciousness.

The only world that wants redeeming is the world of one's own soul, for in that soul is included every other. We have to make our consciousness of the world as perfect as the world really is. The trouble is all in the soul.

A celebrated writer who died just as he was waking up to idealism and its worship of the beauty of sorrow, said in his last book: "Man's soul is the Kingdom of God." Is it? Can the Kingdom of Heaven be a kingdom divided against itself? Can the Unity of the Spirit be the same as the duality of the soul? Can the Eternal know change, variation, reaction, and alternation between opposites?

Man's *Spirit* is the Kingdom of God. But he has not yet come into possession of himself: he has only got as far as the soul.

We think of the soul as "within" because we compare it with body as "without." And we have heard that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within"; so, we think that the soul is the Kingdom of Heaven, until the real "within" makes the false one feel very much "without."

The Spirit of God is the "within" of us, and when the soul knows that "within" as she now knows the "without" of the senses, she will have realised the perfection of her original creation, and the within and the without will be one. But how can she know the Truth of herself while she turns for inspiration to the shadow without instead of to the Substance within? She is for ever receiving the suggestion of the senses: her true image and likeness is defaced by the false image

and likeness of race experience. She can direct her desire as she chooses: she can turn it within to her Spirit and Principle of Life and realise Its perfection of Truth, or she can turn it without to the shows and phantasies of sense.

We allow ourselves to be passive to the wrong thing. We have to reverse our position. We must receive only from "within," and give to the "without." The old order was to be positive to Spirit, negative to sense. The new order is to be negative, receptive, passive to Spirit and very positive to sense. To be positive to sense means more than refusing to accept the evidence of appearances: it means turning away from our old thoughts and feelings; it means ceasing to identify ourselves with our old ideas and emotions. We feel well or ill, glad or sad, and we take our feelings as seriously as if we had no power over them. Yet all our feelings have been *made*, and if we have made them amiss through ignorance, we have only to learn how to re-make them aright. Our thoughts and our feelings no more represent us than our actions and appearance represent us. They are no more than ill-fitting clothes. "As a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed."

We perceive that within us, deeper than the personal consciousness of the cranial brain, deeper

than the universal consciousness of the vital brain, is the Principle and Substance of Eternal Consciousness which awaits the call of our faith in It to come forth into manifestation. We remember how it was said of a certain city that the Christ "could there do no mighty work because of their unbelief." It is the same story to-day. The Divine within us can do no mighty work until our faith in It is stronger than our belief in our personal experiences. For Life is infinitely meek and lowly: It suffers us to use It as we will. We can use It to work out our foolish thoughts and feelings to their logical conclusion of grief, disease, and death, or we can use It according to Its own nature to work out in us Its own image and Its own likeness.

The thought which we allow to occupy the cranial self-consciousness is the order we send in to our Source of Power, and the exact equivalent of that thought is sent back to us in terms of feeling through the vital brain.

Original Feeling, pure subjective Being, is shaped by our conscious thought into any form we choose.

For innumerable ages, as we count time, we have been slowly discovering our power by using it ignorantly to make imperfect conditions of consciousness: we have now to learn how to use it intelligently enough to make a new and perfect consciousness.

But unless we had been allowed to make unlimited mistakes, how could we ever have learnt our power? The Principle of Perfection has suffered us to use It for every sort of imperfection in order that by endless experiment we might at last find out for ourselves the Truth. The evolution of Spirit through Sense, of Life through Matter, gives a scientific meaning to those words of St. Paul in which he sums up the mystery of the Incarnation.

"Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

How much righteousness is there in a diseased body? There must be *some,* or it could not exist at all. If the Principle of Rightness, Holiness, Wholeness, Health, were entirely withdrawn from manifestation in our consciousness we should not have vitality enough even to feel ill. It is never scientifically true to say of ourselves that "there is *no* health in us." The bodily consciousness may be disordered as the result of disorderly thought and feeling, but short of dissolution there is always latent within it its Creative Principle or Spirit of Life. Our remedy is always at hand, nearer than any doctor or medicine.

In dealing with a defective condition of physical consciousness we quickly discover how much we are "tied and bound" by the sense illusion that

body and soul are separate and unlike. It takes some little effort and practice of intelligent self-denial for even an idealist to realise that the healing of any imperfection in his body must depend upon the healing of his consciousness of his body. He has to change his personality, or his particular way of feeling in that respect.

Without thought and feeling the body cannot exist. It comes into manifestation as the direct result of a certain way of thinking and feeling in the race-consciousness of the parents. And its subsequent condition depends upon the way in which its individual possessor deals with his ancestral and parental heritage of thought and feeling. If he accepts that heritage and allows it to govern *his* way of thinking and feeling, he must repeat its errors and take the consequences. If on the other hand he refuses that heritage by denying or turning away from the order of consciousness which it represents, it will have no power over him, and his new way of thinking and feeling will necessarily include a new consciousness of his body.

The one man we know of who realised in objective existence his original perfection as the Son of God, says to us: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." If we would realise the divine unity of our human trinity by evolving into the

Christ or Spiritual consciousness, we must forsake the consciousness we have.

We have supposed that we could only do this by disruption of the body. But when we come to understand the body as the *effect* of the soul, the sensible appearance of thought and feeling, we see that the change of consciousness has nothing to do with physical dissolution. While the body was the most important part of our consciousness we naturally supposed that we must forsake *it* in order to come into the Kingdom of Heaven. But as we shift the base of consciousness from the physical to the psychical, and centre our life in the soul, we find that it is our thoughts and feelings we have to forsake, and that as we change them, their bodily expression changes of itself. Our primers of physiology tell us that our bodies are dying and being reborn with every breath we take, and that in eleven months the whole structure is renewed. If, in any case, we have a new body every year, and if we can improve it by improving the order of our thoughts and emotions, there seems to be no point in the old way of getting rid of it. We are beginning to think that there is more interest in seeing to what degree of improvement we can bring it. We need not concern ourselves about the body when once we have thoroughly grasped that it is the picture of the soul. "For

soul is form and doth the body make." Body is the sensible appearance of feeling formed up into thought.

The destruction and disappearance of the body which we call death, does not of itself include any regenerative change in the soul. The soul of a drunkard is not less intemperate because he loses the visible form of his "inordinate affection." In death, as it is popularly understood, the soul merely withdraws into a more deeply subjective state of psychical consciousness than sleep or trance. Loss of the body does not necessarily involve any transition into the spiritual or immortal order of consciousness. Hades is the state of disembodied souls whose perfect evolution depends upon the resurrection of the Christ consciousness in the living. "I am the Living One . . . and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

The real death and resurrection of the body is the death and resurrection of the soul, and that is to be accomplished here and now by forsaking, denying, losing, undoing, letting go the imperfect self-consciousness which we have built up as the result of our evolutionary experience, and building in its place a new and perfect consciousness of ourselves as we are "in Spirit and in Truth."

The words of the Master-builder warn us that

"a man's foes shall be they of his own household." The friend in disguise with whom we have to reckon as standing between us and our true heritage is our consciousness of those nearest to us. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

To reconstruct the temporal race consciousness of the blood-tie into the Eternal Consciousness of spiritual unity will involve the acutest form of self-denial. We shall have to change our personal consciousness of our families and friends if we are to find the Truth of them.

And in dealing with our attachments it does not matter whether they happen to be of the positive form which we call love, or of the negative form which we call hate. Both alike are bondage. Both have to be overcome. Both require the same treatment. They are the poles of the psychical consciousness which have to be made one.

We alternate perpetually between like and dislike, attraction and repulsion. This dualism of the human soul has to be transformed into the Unity of the Spirit if we are ever to know the Love which is Truth.

We are all familiar with the grand mood of Idealism in which we take the whole world to our heart, and *think* we are "in love and charity with all men." And we know how easily that beautiful bubble of sentimentalism can be pricked by some little irritating stupidity on the part of our next-door neighbour. At one moment we are ready to kiss the dirtiest beggar in the exaltation of our sense of brotherhood, at another we are ready to fly from the face of our nearest relative. We have all been through it thousands of times: we should not be human if we had not.

But when we are tired enough of this divided life of which one half is spent up on the heights and the other half down in the depths; when our desire involuntarily turns into that wonderful little prayer of à Kempis, "Heal my heart of all inordinate affection, that I being healed within and thoroughly purified, may be made fit *to love*"; then we begin to "put away childish things," and find a better way of living.

For who will be so bold as to claim that he is "*fit* to love";—and the words of the original manuscript have the sense of being ready, being able—who will dare to say that he is ready, able, *fit* to love, while there is in his heart any unhealed wound of fear, pride, criticism, anger, or any other kind of grievance or resentment?

As we re-make our consciousness even of the words we use, we come to be very shy of taking the name of Love in vain, for we realise that we know nothing at all about it.

The many emotions which have gone under that title are at their best but a skilful imitation, the psychical shadow of a spiritual Substance as yet unrevealed. Before we can know the meaning of that greatest word we must improve our acquaintance with the word Wholeness or Health.

The reconstruction of our way of thinking and feeling about those to whom we are most closely bound by like or dislike can generally be effected without any outward sign of disturbance: but for people who react so swiftly and intensely to sense-impressions that they are made ill or well by influences which less responsive souls would hardly notice, it is sometimes necessary to carry the process of forsaking right through to the outer consciousness, and cut off for a time the very appearance of those who suggest the particular state of emotion which is being regenerated. This extreme form of self-denial will not be pleasant, because it runs counter to the accepted ideal of Christian conduct, and for that reason is likely to meet with disapproval. But he who seeks the Kingdom of the New Consciousness will "take no account" even of his own heart's

disapproval. For he knows that his personal consciousness of his friend or foe stands between him and the Truth of that friend, and he will therefore spare no pains to lose the old way of feeling in order that he may find the Truth of himself, his friend, and all the world.

Pain is the evolutionary factor for quickening intelligence. Therefore, blessed are they who have the greatest capacity for suffering. When intelligence has evolved far enough for man to know the Truth of himself, pain ceases. While there is any pain we know that we are not yet healed, not yet made whole, not yet "made fit to love." When the old self is really lost the very memory of pain will be gone. There will no longer be in our consciousness any possibility of reaction to the suggestions which once hurt us.

Meanwhile, our greatest benefactors are those who make us feel the most, whether it be pain or pleasure. For feeling is our motive-power, and if we only know how to use it, it will carry us straight into our Kingdom. Our work is to change the natural association between emotion and personality, into a spiritual association between emotion and Truth. We have to withdraw our feeling from the poles of like and dislike between which it is now divided and gather it up into a unit of desire concentrated upon the Principle within.

A simple and practical way of doing this is to hold in the mind some word representing Principle at such times as emotion is strongest in us. Whenever any thought or appearance rouses vivid feeling, that thought should be instantly replaced by a word which stands for some mode of Divine Being. If, for instance, we have been stirred to a passion of anger, we can actually use that energy to vitalise our lukewarm consciousness of abstract words like Spirit, Truth, Rightness, Wisdom, Health, by repeating them over and over again as long as the feeling lasts. By doing this we are changing the form of that emotion. We are turning our passional nature away from its old ignorant experience, and directing it inward to our Principle.

In the same way, intense emotions of delight which have hitherto been called out by some actual or imaginary appearance, may be drawn away from that appearance and associated instead with the Divine Reality latent within.

All feeling is energy. Energy ignorantly directed is destructive. Illness of mind and body is the result of misdirected energy. We have to learn how to use our passional forces with such intelligence that they may perfectly reconstruct our defective consciousness.

Our consciousness of Health is so defective that

we think of it as the antithesis of disease. For this reason it is not the best word to use when we are feeling ill. It involves a contradiction which is not soothing to a disturbed state of mind. Moreover by indirect suggestion it tends to keep us preoccupied with the very idea which we want to forsake. In our intervals of comparative peace it is well to change our consciousness of the word Health by using it alternately with Goodness and Wholeness as the synonym of Perfection. In this way our elementary idea of health as the opposite of illness will develop into a feeling of the changeless or immortal "Beauty of Holiness." For to realise the true Health, our sensible well-being must come as "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

The increasing illness of this age is a hopeful sign of transition in human consciousness. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." We need waste no regret over the lost norm of physical health. The "neurotics" of to-day are beggars indeed. They are poor enough in spirit to be paupers in vitality. This may seem paradoxical in view of the fact that neurotics are hard to kill. They appear to have more vitality than others, but this is because pain has taught them how to make a little "breath of life" go a long way. A neurotic never even

breathes the outer air as deeply as his stronger brethren; he is a cowering, crouching, tremulous, and anxious thing, like one who lives on suffrance and begs his right to exist. His very body has become more sensitive to suggestion than the souls of happier men. And because of his greater need he is more readily responsive to the call of the Kingdom.

"For behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, have part therein: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are."

LECTURE IV.

The Power of the Word. The Use of the Will. The Conscious and the Subconscious Mind. Suggestion. Inspiration and Self-control.

The Power of the word is the Spirit of the word. At present we know only the body and the soul of the words we use. The body or outer sense of a word is the sight and sound of it; the soul or inner sense of a word is the thought and feeling of it. With these we are more or less acquainted. But our interpretation of a word depends upon our experience. We see, hear, think and feel every word through our personality. Our words evolve with us. As we differ in experience so we differ in the values we attach to words. In our days of rudimentary intelligence, words mean something very different from the significance we give them when recovered cosmic memories have enlarged our mental horizon. The man of genius knows the soul of the word. The Christ alone knows the Spirit of the word. In this knowledge lies His power over the visible and invisible worlds of sense. "I am the Living One; . . . and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

For the spiritual consciousness is itself the perfect Word or expression of life, the Alpha and Omega of existence. Ultimate Man is Original Man. The first and the last are one. In Spirit there is neither end nor beginning.

The Spirit of the word is our Principle of creation. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." Even to make the appearance of disease we have to use the Principle or Spirit of Health.

We are all poets or *makers*, and as such it is by our words that we are justified in the day of our judgment, and by our words that we are condemned. Judgment is the summing up of results, the final weighing of the value of evidence. Our bodies represent the sum of our thinking. At every moment our Principle "enters into judgment" with us upon the evidence of the works done in the body. Our appearance shows what use we have made of the talents entrusted to us, to what purpose we have turned the power bequeathed to us in our race-consciousness.

And our speech "bewrayeth" us. The audible expression of our thought and feeling reveals even more than our tangible appearance. Our words show the order of the thought-forms we are making. Their visible shape is intellectual: their audible

shape is emotional. Sight is related to thought as sound is related to feeling. So, the tone of a word gives the clue to the subconscious self. This is why the word we hear, is more effectual than the word we see. Cardinal Newman recognised this when he based his famous plea for Universities upon the mystical force of oral teaching. Children learn more quickly and more thoroughly through their ears than through their eyes, because sound appeals directly to the feeling nature of the subconscious mind. The atmospheric vibration which the mechanism of the ear translates into sound, is to the subjective or sympathetic consciousness, as the etheric vibration which the eye converts into sight is to the objective or intellectual consciousness.

Man, in completing the circle of his evolution, comes back self-consciously to the point whence he started subconsciously; for sight corresponds to the solar ether to which science has traced the genesis of our earth, and sound corresponds to the elemental or aërial phase of our development. This intimate relation between sound and the subjective consciousness accounts for the ease with which animals, savages, children, and women respond to oral suggestion. In those whose race-consciousness is balanced by a high degree of intellectual or cranial development there is an

equal sensitiveness to both sound and sight, so that the organs of these sensations become interchangeable in their functions, and such people can hear colour and see music. This unifying of the psychical consciousness has already begun to foreshadow itself in certain individuals who are regarded by old-fashioned biologists as exceptional and abnormal.

But the evolving norm of a new order must be abnormal to the old standard. For instance, the evolutionary impulse which expressed itself in what is called the "Woman Movement," takes a new aspect when we see it as a necessary phase in the progress of human intelligence toward completeness. When man begins to perceive himself as the perfect word or expression of Life, the old separation between the male and female halves of his nature ceases to have any meaning for him. He learns that in himself he is whole and indivisible. The evidence of the senses which would persuade him that the woman is something apart from him, gives place to the evidence of an inner knowledge that she is the emotional nature within him.

Physical man looks upon himself as incomplete and dependent upon physical woman as his complement.

Psychical man learns that the subliminal race-

soul in his consciousness is the woman of him, the subjective emotional nature which receives his word and renders it as thought made live with feeling of which his bodily appearance is the visible expression. The subconscious mind is the body-builder, and she builds according to the suggestion received from the conscious mind.

In the "Woman Movement" the race-consciousness of the individual female was developing the objective or masculine side of its intelligence. The intellectual woman, and the emotional man represent intermediate stages of human consciousness on its way through the duality of the psychical order toward that spiritual unity in which there is "neither male nor female," nor any alternation between opposites.

The Christ or Divine Consciousness is the immaculate conception of the soul inspired by the Spirit of the Word. The intellect which conveys the word of Truth to the soul is the angel of the Annunciation. The will is the St. Joseph keeping watch over the friendly beasts of the senses while the soul brings forth her spiritual child in peace.

In the early stages of transition from the old order to the new, the will is useful in dealing with the alternate inertia and violence of the animal consciousness. Later, when desire turns involun-

tarily to Principle, when the soul begins directly to know and love the Spirit within her instead of merely thinking and feeling about it, when even in our sleep we so deny the dream-shadows of our old selves, that there is no response in us to the memories and imaginations of sense experience, then the work of the will is done.

As long as the soul consciously or subconsciously *wants* to break the law of righteousness, it needs the police force of the will. While we are unhealed of our "inordinate affections" we must use the will to keep law and order: but when we are made whole and "fit to love" our Principle, we pass from law into grace, and the will can rest from its labours, for its works do follow it.

We shall save ourselves from many blunders, and from much disappointment, by clearly recognising this bi-sexuality of the soul; for long after the reasonable "male" of our intelligence is devoted to the Truth, we shall find the emotional "female" of us playing the traitor. But she is then only doing what we in our ignorance have taught her to do. The subconscious mind is entirely obedient to the conscious mind. We have given her such unintelligent orders for so many years that we must not be surprised if it takes her a little time to get accustomed to our new ideas. The subliminal self has to carry out exactly

every suggestion made by the personal self. Every thought which the will allows to rest in the cranial brain is subconsciously received into the race-soul of the vital brain to be reproduced as correspondent emotion. As we think, so we feel. Conversely, as we feel, so we think. Psychical existence is made up of perpetual action and reaction between the conscious and the subconscious self. Our bodily consciousness is the sensible expression of this action and reaction, the outward and visible sign of the suggestions received by the primary or central brain of the sympathetic system from the secondary or superficial brain of the cerebro-spinal system.

"But," people say, "we never suggest illness to ourselves." No, it is not necessary to suggest *effects* to that magically intelligent partner of ours. We have only to give her the seed of an idea: she knows all about developing it. Give her fear, worry, fretfulness, impatience, condemnation or any other little germ of that sort to work with, and see what she will make of it. The ingenuity of her devices is bewildering.

Two people of equally critical, fault-finding temper may get quite different results from their similar suggestions. One may get neuralgia: the other may get dyspepsia. Or one of them may even get both these, while the other may get

insomnia. Swedenborg in his *Doctrine of Correspondences* tried to work out a rule for these things, but he wisely gave it up when he found that there is no science or order in error.

It is enough to know that wrong thinking of any kind will bring wrong feeling, and that wrong feeling in the body means illness.

Another point of perplexity to enquirers is the confirmed invalidism of many persons of saintly character.

But the kind of goodness which is without knowledge will not save anyone from disease. The innocence of the little child will not protect it from being burnt if it touches the fire. Nor will innocence alone warn it not to touch the fire. The sufferings of the saints have helped to quicken human intelligence in its evolution toward the Knowledge which eliminates the cause of pain.

As we come to understand the power of suggestion in the re-formation of consciousness, we simultaneously discover how little we control this power. We are directly or indirectly influenced by all that we see, hear, touch, taste, smell, think, feel, or dream. We are at the mercy of suggestion from without. We are affected by the way people look at us, by the tone in which they speak to us, by their unuttered thought and

feeling about us. We are constantly receiving, and as constantly giving, the ignorant suggestions of the senses. Who of us speaks the *Truth* that is within him? Who of us thinks and feels by inspiration of the *Spirit*? Who of us *knows* the Divine Original of himself, the very Word or Breath of God, the Substance of Eternal Consciousness?

But we are learning that true speech, that spiritual inspiration, that Divine Knowledge. "Thine eyes shall see the King in His Beauty: they shall behold the land of far distances."

Already the mental horizon has widened immeasurably for us when we perceive that there is within our reach a consciousness represented by the words To Know, and To Love, which is as much greater than the one we are at home in in our understanding of the words To Think, and To Feel, as it is greater than the animal consciousness of To See and To Hear. Latent within us is an order of consciousness as far beyond the highest range of our present way of thinking and feeling, as our thought and emotion is beyond the range of sensation experienced by the cat or the dog. And into this "land of far distances," this land of boundless horizons, we come by the creative power of the Spirit of the Word.

Many of the words we use most often have no Spirit or Life in them. They are ghost-words; the futile shades of false experience.

Who ever wants to re-produce the thought and feeling embodied in the word "disease"? And yet how persistently we suggest that word to ourselves and others. How inveterate is the habit of talking about ailments and their cure. How unkind we think we are, if we do not sympathise with our neighbours' sufferings. How we fret and fever ourselves over the poverty, distress and ugliness in the slums of our consciousness. We concentrate our attention upon the very things we have to forsake: we cling desperately to the very self we have to deny. We can realise no power over our defective conditions while we waste our energy in grieving over them. We misdirect the re-creative force of our feelings. We sow the subconscious mind thick with the seed of tares and wonder that our harvest yields so little wheat. The word of Truth is the bread of life. We starve our souls by giving them the stones of falsehood.

We have to use the will to choose the right word, the right thought, and hold it steadily in the mind until it quickens into right feeling.

But the subconscious self responds so habitually and automatically to the suggestions of others,

that we need some patience to learn the art of self-suggestion. The picture of ourselves which we see in those about us is as yet so far from being the image and likeness of the Truth of us that we have to be continually turning away from it in our hearts and looking inward beyond all thought and feeling to that Self which is waiting to be revealed. This is practical faith. We believe the Divine Self *is* there within us; at any moment we can lay hold of the word of Truth in our minds; but we have not yet evolved the feeling which corresponds to that word. Our feeling nature is pre-empted by the senses. But if we will have as much patience in re-forming our consciousness as we have in learning the science and art of the phenomenal world, we shall come into possession of a wholly new order of experience. *The word we hold will create in us a consciousness of itself.* Even the false word has the shadow of this creative power: how then can the true word fail? It may take a little time before we get our result, because the new consciousness has to be formed in the subliminal depths of us before we can realise it in our upper mind. But there is no possibility of failure. The spiritual consciousness is in the line of our evolution. We can develop it as surely as we have developed the psychical consciousness. The

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law of biology holds good: *the need creates the organism*. The void attracts the fulness. They who seek, find. Perfection is gloriously inevitable. We cannot miss it when once our wills are set to find it at all costs. But some of us have nearly to die for want of it before we make up our minds to get it.

The young man in Vivêkânanda's story who thought he wanted God more than anything, and went to an Indian Sage to learn how to find Him, received no answer to his eager questions until he had gone many times. Then the Sage rose from his meditation, and took the young man down to the river to bathe with him. And while they were in the water the Sage suddenly grasped the young man and held him under the waves until he was almost drowned. Then he released him. And when the young man had recovered, the Sage said to him, "What did you want most when you were under the water?"

The young man answered, "A breath of air." And the Sage said, "When you want God as you wanted that breath of air, you will find Him."

It is of course useless to banish the false words from our speech if we still let their image occupy our minds, if we still let them traffic in the temple of our consciousness. Moreover it is not enough merely to say and think the true word. It must

have its own intonation. A wrong word said with a right tone of voice is more constructive of good than a right word spoken in a wrong tone. For the tone conveys the feeling behind the word, and it is to the tone of an audible suggestion that the subconscious mind responds.

Let us for a moment consider the evolution of a negative word. Take the word "drunk." At two stages of our development that word has no feeling behind it. To the little child, before it has received the suggestions of its elders in this matter, the word has no more meaning than it has to the sage. The observant and imaginative child who meets a drunken man for the first time will probably laugh at him as one of the funniest things it has ever seen. And this is a perfectly natural point of view. The child is accustomed to seeing people walk straight and steadily. Its sense of the normal makes it appreciate the incongruity of a man in the street tumbling about like a clown in a pantomime. Incongruity is humorous. So the child laughs at what it takes for an obvious joke. If it should happen to see this joke in the company of an elder who did not wish to suggest any association of moral obliquity, and who therefore in response to the child's question about the man, said "He is drunk," in a tone free from all feeling of blame or sorrow, the child would probably repeat

the word quite happily to itself and think it meant something strangely amusing. A *drunken* man would simply mean a man who walked *funnily*. But if on the other hand the elder had spoken the word in a heavy, mournful, shamed and disapproving tone the child would have instantly lost its sense of fun, and would not only have reflected the feeling suggested to it, but in proportion to its sensitiveness would also have felt some degree of personal guilt for having laughed at anything so serious. If life were subsequently to give this sensitive child such an experience of the cruelties of drunkenness that long before it grew up its nerves were shattered by fear, there would be a period in the development of its consciousness when it would wince at the mere sight of that word as a slave winces at the sight of the lash he has felt. But when in the fulness of time he began to evolve toward Knowledge, and the inertia and violence of the psychical consciousness began to give way to the inspiration and self-control of the spiritual order, his fear of negative conditions and of the words representing them would be cast out by the Love which "taketh not account of evil." He would then look at a drunkard with the eyes of a sage, and more than his early childish humour would come back again, as he realised the incongruity between the true man and his appearance.

So we shall not avoid false words because we are afraid of them, but because they are not worth taking into account. We have a better use for the subconscious mind than to let it reproduce the rubbish of personality.

Natural man alternates between inertia and violence All defective states of consciousness group themselves under one or other of these extremes, and in practising our art of self-suggestion we shall choose our words to fit the need of the moment. If we have to deal with depression, stupidity, moroseness, langour, laziness or any other variety of inertia we shall take words with clean-cutting consonants, and short sharp vowels, words with bony dental sounds, rough rousing aspirates, and hissing sibilants : words like Spirit, Life, Wisdom, Strength, Righteousness, Principle, Courage, Truth. The very sound of those words is enough to break up the illusion of a negative mood, and call out a reconstructive energy. In dealing with violence, the energy is already called out : we have to change the character of its expression. To do this we shall probably find it better not to oppose a contrast by using such words as Holiness, Faith, Health, Love, Grace, Goodness, Beauty, Joy, Eternal Peace, for these gentle lulling *l*'s, and broad soothing vowels can sometimes provoke a burst of scorn and impatience

which delays the result we want. It may be useful at such times to let our violence spend itself at first in intense reiteration of some word, or words, of Truth represented by keen incisive sounds, and when the worst of the storm is over to replace them by words of more peaceful tone.

It is also good to use our words of Truth in a rhythmic sequence, for rhythm has an effect upon the subconscious mind which makes it a powerful accompaniment to suggestion in spiritual development. The reason for this becomes clear when we remember that the subconscious mind as we know it is the record of cosmic evolution, and that the material universe has been evolved by the rhythmic alternation of inertia and violence, or, as a physicist might say, by the inter-action of mass and force governed by a law, or principle, of order.

The history of science, art, and religion shows that man has always instinctively used rhythm as a means of calling out any extraordinary, or so-called supernatural power.

The Chinese or Indian coolie who chants to ease his labour; the mathematician who walks up and down, or smokes, while he solves his problem; the poet who, like Milton, finds a swing a help to inspiration; the sufferer who tosses to and fro to relieve a pain; the woman who sings

and rocks a child to sleep; the priest who intones his prayers; the physician who alternates his prescriptions; the wizard who makes an incantation; all are using the same law, all are appealing to the subconscious power of response to rhythmic suggestion.

Rhythm of sound and gesture will set free the incalculable energies of the subliminal self: but those energies are directed by conscious thought and feeling. To *submit* to any form of rhythm is to lay ourselves open to the suggestion of whatever idea or emotion may be strongest in us, or in those nearest to us. We must be masters of rhythm, not its servants. And to be masters of rhythm we must use it for spiritual suggestion. We can use it, if we like, to give us "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them"; the whole psychical experience of the race since Adam can be reproduced in us, if we choose. But that will not make us masters of rhythm, or masters of anything. To be a master of rhythm would be to have perfect control of the body and all its rhythmic functions, perfect control of the mind and all its recurrent states of thought and feeling. Toward this spiritual self-control the disciple comes by using the simplest forms of rhythm to impress his subconscious memory with the particular word, or mode, of Truth he wishes

to realise at the moment. Complicated rhythms are not serviceable to him because they involve an intellectual distraction which he is careful to avoid while he is practising subjective concentration upon his Principle.

The simpler the rhythm the more nearly related it is to the elemental experience which is deepest in the subconscious memory. The rhythm of the ether which was the first state of our cosmic evolution is a vibration so intense that it is as stillness compared with the atmospheric pulsation of the second "day" of creation. The nearer we approach to our Source of Life the more intense will be our consciousness of Silence.

Therefore, a monotonous alternation of sound such as we get in Oriental music—a music which seems strange to the intellectual ears of the West because it expresses the primal or elemental consciousness of the subjective mind—is the best sort of rhythm in spiritual exercises. At first this seems tiresome to the objective intelligence because it has forgotten its early days. The cranial consciousness develops, like the Prodigal Son, by ignoring its origin in order to explore the world for itself as if it were independent and self-supporting. When it finds out that it can only get the *husks* of knowledge in the "far country" of the senses, it turns back and recovers all its lost treasures of

consciousness when it gets home to its source. As man remembers his evolution, and takes conscious possession of all that he has subconsciously passed through since he first existed in the light of the sun, he learns the true value of the least and most despised of his experiences. The gutter-music of our barrel organs is as good as any other form of rhythm for spiritual suggestion. It is in fact more useful than the music we admire, because, although all music may be equally good as to its rhythm or mathematic quality, street-music expresses an order of emotion which belongs to an earlier level of our consciousness, a deeper layer of the subliminal self, and it therefore serves directly to withdraw us from the superficial plane of personality into the universal or race-soul, whence we pass inward to the Silence of Unity which is the Spirit of the word. All sorts of experiences which have hitherto suggested negative or defective states of feeling can in this way be so changed that our greatest hindrances become our greatest helps. Trains, steamers, motor-cars, crowds, theatres, concerts, street noises and every other form of vibration which to the highly tensioned nerves of to-day can suggest acute distress, can be turned into suggestions of re-creative Truth if we learn how to control the rhythm of these things by the Power of the word.

As inspiration dispels inertia, and violence gives way to self-control, we find that we are as much at home in society as in solitude, and the cities of men become as beautiful as the open ways of desert and mountain, forest and sea. Those pictures of our earlier evolution can then no longer haunt us with the memories of our old relation to them. The tree, the cloud, the wave, the wind can no more lure us backward to their elemental level with the call of a kinship closer and stronger than the tie to our fellow man.

In our weakling days we cling to "Nature, the kind old nurse," but when we come to years of discretion we need no more cossetting in the cotton-wool illusions of dependence upon "quietness" and "fresh air." We learn to make our own quietness in an order of silence which no sound can disturb ; we learn to draw our breath of life from "an ampler ether, a diviner air" *within* us.

This inward breathing of the Spirit of the word is the true inspiration which results in an *involuntary* self-control. The general idea of self-control is self-repression. But repression is not control. We repress the lions in the Zoo, by shutting them up in cages, but we do not control them. The prophet Daniel knew something about controlling lions, and we shall be on the track of his secret when we know how to control the inertia and

violence of our animal or natural consciousness by the inspiration of the spiritual or Divine Self within which is the Truth of us.

The sort of control we know is the control of the popular "lion-tamer." We stand *in* the cage, locked in with our animal energies, and compel them to do our bidding up to a certain point by holding over them the whip of the will. We control the violence of a lesser fear by using the violence of a greater fear. We control our lions by becoming a bigger sort of lion. But we have been told of a control in which there is no fear.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a *little child* shall lead them." Again we are directed to the subjective intelligence as the agent of power. When we are sure of our *power*, we do not need to express it by *force*. When our contraries are harmonised, our extremes made one, *sub*consciously, there will be no need of any whip.

To take a frivolous example, which is nevertheless typical of every kind of fear, many a nervous woman can repress her fear of a mouse to the point of making herself sit quite still and look unmoved while it runs about the room. But she does this by a violent effort of her will, and if for an instant she were to relax this voluntary tension the sub-

conscious self would react in an involuntary impulse to scream, or spring into a chair. She may scold herself, laugh at herself, reason with herself, refuse to recognise such silliness, but still, after years of effort, if she wakes in the night and hears a gnawing in the wainscot she instinctively holds her breath, and every nerve is taut with fear lest the creature should get into the room. She knows it could do her no harm even if it ran over her, and yet the mere imagination of being touched by it turns her cold. These primitive terrors seem supremely absurd to the intellect because there is no reason in them. Men and women whose voluntary self-control is highly developed, whose courage in what are called the "big things" of life has been proved beyond question, will suffer extraordinarily from some trifle like a cat, a mouse, a spider, an earwig, a moth, a bat, a beetle, a maggot, a slug, a caterpillar, a toad, or a harmless snake. Why is this? *Fear* is the dominant characteristic of the animal consciousness. Of familiar animals the mouse is perhaps the most timid. It is the extreme embodiment of fear, and as such it is an extreme *suggestion* of fear. The sight or sound of the mouse suggests fear to the subliminal self: reminds it in fact of its evolutionary experience, and no intellectual self-control can transmute this race-memory. The will can repress its

manifestation, but fear of anything is only truly controlled when there is no subconscious or involuntary reaction to the sight, sound, touch or imagination of that thing. Sentimental ways of dealing with the fear of a mouse, such as making a pet of the creature and studying its intimate life, are quite as useless as the drastic method of making one's self sit calmly among hundreds of swarming rats. Such self-control is an intellectual illusion. It comforts us perhaps in wiling away the time until we are strong enough to be bereft of our illusions. Then, our behaviour in some vivid dream about rats and mice will show us how little the subconscious self cares for the moral grandeur of our will.

We can of course knock our partner on the head by violent exercise of the will, and stun her so completely for a time that she responds to nothing, and we then probably flatter ourselves that we have mastered her at last. But soon or late she wakes, and measures again to us the measure we have meted to her, with so exact a justice that we learn in the end to treat her in a wiser way.

It is evident that fear, as "the mark of the beast" must be overcome before we can enter into our kingdom and "inherit all things." What form of suggestion will serve us best in recon-

structing this defective state of mind? "Perfect love casteth out fear." But our consciousness of love is so imperfect—the word suggests so many mixed emotions to our subconscious mind whose race experience includes every variety of passion and sentimentalism—that it is better to use the words *Infinite Goodness* as our inspiration for the attainment of true self-control. Even to associate these words with our physical inspiration will be a definite step toward casting out fear. For by mentally saying the words, or better still, by listening to their mental sound, as we take in a deep, slow, steady breath, we shall soon begin to feel that we are breathing in the soul of Goodness instead of the soul of fear. The thought and feeling of the true word will actually replace the thought and feeling of the false word, and the correspondent change in the body will quickly show itself in a stronger heart-beat, a steadier pulse, and a general sensation of well-being. Expansion will take the place of contraction and the bodily metabolism will benefit accordingly. This psychical inspiration will lead by easy stages to spiritual inspiration. From the thought and feeling of the true word we shall evolve into the Eternal or changeless consciousness of its Spirit and Power.

And when we begin to learn how to draw our

inspiration directly from our Principle within, we shall become indifferent to the kind of air we may be breathing without. Our lungs will then work as happily in a London fog as on a Swiss mountain, and ugly smells will have no power to suggest that our minds should breathe in the germ-ideas of disease. No suggestion of evil can affect the soul when she is subconsciously controlled by the Spirit of Infinite Goodness which is her true, perfect and eternal Self.

If Being and Existence are one and indivisible; if man's soul *is* the expression of Eternal Spirit; if our life *does* depend upon "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," is it any wonder that we perish when we feed our minds as we do on words that have no Spirit or Life in them, on words which have only a spurious vitality of defective thought and feeling? When we come to examine the kind of stuff we try to live on, we are surprised that we should be able to last as long as we do. It literally is "such stuff as dreams are made of"; shadowy, ghostly stuff of appearances, the picture of the world of effects, the reflection of sense experience with no Substance in it.

To *live* we must learn how to breathe nothing but the Truth that is within us. Its inspiration must be so fulfilling that there is no room left for

the old self-consciousness: it is cast out. In the psychical order, our way of thinking and feeling stands between us and the Truth: in the spiritual order, the Truth will stand between us and all our former consciousness. We shall not even *want* the Truth, for there will be nothing apart from It, nothing beside It. We shall see It, hear It, touch It, taste It, breathe It, think It, feel It, speak It, dream It, know It, love It. It will be our *whole* consciousness.

The eyes that "see the King in His Beauty" will see nothing else, for everything will reflect that Beauty.

The soul that listens for the voice of Eternal Being will hear It as the Silence within all sound saying "I am, and there is none beside Me."

LECTURE V.

Meditation. The Science of Silence. "Purgation, Contemplation, Illumination." Perception, Concentration, Realisation.

Meditation is one of the most interesting words in the language. The Latin *meditāri,* to ponder, is supposed to be from the same base as *medēri,* to heal; for the Aryan root of both these words is √MADH, to learn, to heal; from √MA, or √MAN, to think, to wish, to dwell upon, to stay.

The word *Contemplation* which is popularly used as synonymous with meditation, has a very different origin. Its root is √TAM, to cut, whence the Greek *temnein,* to cut off, *temenos,* a piece of land marked off as sacred to a god; and the Latin *templum,* a temple, *contemplari,* to observe, or consider, as the augurs in their divination.

Mediaeval mysticism has added to the word Contemplation a wealth of meaning not strictly its own, but now so closely related to it in all thoughtful minds, that the word must be taken at its present value as standing for a clearly defined degree in the process of meditation.

For, like everything else, meditation consists of three in one, and of this trinity contemplation is the middle term.

To meditate is to heal, or make whole, the mind by staying it upon its Principle of Knowledge. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is *stayed* on Thee."

The soul withdraws from sense and from all the images or ideals of sense, to dwell, or rest upon its Spirit.

"He that *dwelleth* in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Meditation is the art of listening to the Spirit of the word. Clearly then, it cannot be self-conscious thinking, since this would be pre-occupation with the *soul* of the word. Thought, as we know it, is mental action. When we think, our minds are in motion, not stayed, not dwelling, or at rest.

In the little song from Isaiah, the alternative rendering of "mind" is "thought, or imagination." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose thought, or imagination, is stayed on Thee."

If imagination is stayed, it cannot be busying itself in making pictures. In meditation proper the image-making faculty of the mind is quiescent. There must be silence in the soul before "the still, small voice" of the Spirit can be heard.

Silence is as yet but imperfectly understood. The physical quietness, coveted by sensitive idealists is no more than the empty shell of silence, and,

like an empty shell, it reverberates with the echoes of an imaginary sea.

Under an outward appearance of calm, the soul may be restless with unsatisfied desire; beneath a semblance of stillness and silence, the mind may be distracted by clamouring thoughts and violent emotions.

There is also the silence of inertia, the fictitious peace of the heart which has never been awakened, or has been drugged to sleep.

And there are many quiet faces that look

"Like burnt-out craters healed with snow"

But this is not the healing of meditation.

The Science, or Knowledge, of Silence brings the peace which is fulness of life, not the frozen emptiness of death. "Be still, and know that I am God." The stillness of thought and feeling essential to knowledge of Eternal Goodness is neither the reverie of animal comfort nor the rigid equilibrium of self-repression. East and West alike have elaborated the Science of Silence into a complicated system of mental discipline, for it is easier to write volumes on what it is not, than to say simply what it is. Yet, in itself, it is as simple as breathing when once the lungs are in their right element. Our difficulties come from trying to live out of our element. We try to breathe choke-

damp. The books on meditation teach us to discern the wrong element: they prepare the mind toward the initial degree of "purgation" or *perception*.

The relation between these two words becomes clear when we remember the sixth beatitude:

"Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall *see* God."

To perceive Spirit the mind must be pure, clear, free from the distractions of sense. And here at the outset we come upon an apparent confusion which often bewilders the student of Meditation. Perception is spoken of as an elementary stage, and yet it is defined in terms of perfection. How can one be both at the beginning and the end of a subject at the same time?

We shall get our answer by recollecting that we are dealing with an evolution of consciousness, a gradual unfolding or expansion of new power from within. To be wholly "pure in heart," entirely free from the bondage of false experience, so that there was no reaction, no relapse into old conditions, would be perfection. But this does not come all at once; we have to *grow* into it. We have to be "faithful in a very little" before we can be "faithful also in much." If for a single moment we can keep our minds free from images of sense by holding a word of Truth, we have achieved the first step toward the ultimate freedom

of being so possessed by the Truth that we shall see nothing else.

Perfection is unity: but growth is by alternation. With practice, the moments of pure perception will recur more and more frequently until they concentrate into the second degree which is contemplation, and that in turn will, by practice, take us on to the perfect, or unvarying, state of Illumination in which Truth is realised as All.

A simple way of understanding Meditation is to look upon each moment as a unit made up of these three states, of which Perception corresponds to the personal, or conscious, mind, Contemplation to the universal, or subconscious mind, and Illumination, or Realisation, to the Principle. In this way we get the body, soul, and spirit of Meditation in one, and avoid the risk of delaying our development by putting off to the future that which belongs to the present.

It also saves us from making too much of the state of the superficial or personal consciousness. We shall not over-estimate the fine thoughts and exalted feelings which may come during our exercise in Meditation, nor shall we be cast down if they are of a less welcome nature. Strictly, the high thought, as we call it, is as disorderly in Meditation as the low thought; because the aim is to keep the mind in a state of stillness without formed thought of any kind.

But this is not easy at first. As soon as we attempt to control the mind, it becomes so unruly that Oriental metaphysicians compare it to a mad monkey. To sit down with the intention of keeping the thoughts fixed for a given time on a certain word, or sequence of words, is the signal, in early days, for the imagination to display a frantic and foolish energy. But if we take no account of its doings, it will tire itself out after a while, and become amenable to the order of the will. To take it seriously, by being pleased or displeased by any of its antics, is to prolong the period of its rebellion. If, during the interval set apart for mental silence, we allow our feelings to carry us away into admiration of the noble idea which may present itself, we shall be equally at the mercy of distressful feeling when imagination takes an ignoble shape. To gain control of the workings of the mind we must refuse to be moved by either the best, or the worst, it can do at such times. We shall gently ignore it until it learns obedience. This attitude of indifference to what may be passing in the upper mind during our initial stage of practising the art of Meditation, is made easy by remembering that the subconscious or vital self responds to the *intention* of the conscious self; a psychological fact which, by the way, explains a certain devotion of the Roman

Church which sometimes seems unreasonable to the Protestant.

There can be no despondency, or fear of failure, while this law holds. Old habits of thought and feeling may automatically repeat themselves for a time in spite of all our efforts, but when once the will is set toward the new order they are doomed to disappear. The primary intelligence always answers the deepest wish—hence the miscarriage of many prayers. If we ask for one thing and mean another, Life will give us what we want in our hearts, not what we ask for in our heads, and as long as there is division in our prayers, discord in the mental *tone* of our requests, there will also be a corresponding degree of inharmony in their fulfilment. The preliminary process of meditation was for this reason appropriately named "Purgation" by the mystics of Europe, inasmuch as the mind must be purged of its trivial dissipations, its divided interests, by the cathartic discipline of the will.

We need not, therefore, be troubled by the swarm of superficial thoughts which seem in the beginning to thwart our purpose, for we shall be rewarded according to the depth of our *desire* to meditate. It may be months before we can succeed in getting more than a momentary lull in the tumult of our personal consciousness, but

in each lull a fresh stone is built into our new house of life, another step is taken toward that true self-control in which our thoughts and feelings will be as perfectly at our service as our hands and feet. By practising steadily day after day, it will come to be as unnatural to use a phrase like "I couldn't sleep for thinking about it," as it would now be to say in excuse for sleeplessness, "My feet would walk me about all night."

It is best to begin with very short and easy exercises. Enthusiastic students nearly break their hearts by setting themselves Herculean tasks in Meditation before their mental muscle has had a chance to develop. They do not understand that intellectual power does not help them here. The mind may be admirably trained in the world of the senses by scientific or artistic study, but that sort of training does not serve for Meditation. Its advantages are counter-balanced by the fact that the co-ordinating imagination has been habitually exercised upon the evolutionary experience of the race, and is deeply persuaded that this, in its ideal aspect, is spiritual. Here, again, there seems to be a perplexing contradiction; for if we accept the statement that intellectual gifts do not help in Meditation, what are we to make of the other statement that the purpose of evolution is to attain perfect self-consciousness? How is man

to evolve into complete objective possession of All Knowledge, if the cranial brain, the organ of his self-consciousness, is of itself useless for spiritual development.

This puzzle clears itself in proportion to our understanding of the mystery of death and resurrection.

The Truth says "He that loseth his life (or his soul) for my sake shall find it." Our present self-consciousness must make way for a greater. The cranial intelligence which we have so far developed is but the scaffolding of the real structure. Intellectual perception of truth is as the Court of the Gentiles in the Temple of Meditation. We "deny," "forsake," "lose," "die," to this outer and rudimentary self that we may find the True Self within us and know "the power of his resurrection."

And by this resurrection into the new consciousness, we recover all those gifts which we for a time forsook.

"Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the Kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."

How does this apply to our moment of meditation?

Let us suppose that as the result of some objective experience in sense, such as the fact of hearing or reading a set of lectures, combined with a subjective experience in sense such as turning that fact over in our minds, we arrive at the intellectual perception that it would be good to meditate. Acting upon that perception, we resolve to begin in the very simplest way by *staying* the mind for one second upon a word of Truth. We choose, perhaps, the word "Spirit." If the consciousness is inert, the imagination sluggish, we may succeed in saying our word once or even twice without the interruption of a single formed thought about it. And we may feel no effect. The next second may not appear in any way different to us because we have spoken this word. It seems to have left us as it found us. There has been no evident response from our subconscious partner.

But the mere fact of having chosen to occupy our minds even for an instant with a word which represents an order of consciousness utterly beyond our present level, is a step toward that order. The will has been set in the direction of our ultimate evolution. We have, for at least one moment, forsaken the personal self we know by turning toward the Divine Self we want to know. We have momentarily invoked the Spirit or

Truth of ourselves from its latent depth beneath the threshold of familiar consciousness. That there is no immediate change is not surprising, when we remember that all the race memories lie packed away in the under-mind between us and our Spirit. We have to reckon with this Apollyon before we get home to our kingdom within.

The race self may lie entirely dormant in us during the early days of learning the science of Silence. While our consciousness is mainly personal and objective the subliminal memories do not trouble us. Our evolutionary experience is dim and remote enough to be a negligible quantity. At this stage we are dealing with the body of Meditation; the word in its audible and inaudible sound, its visible and invisible shape, absorbs our attention to the exclusion of any conscious thought or feeling about its psychical significance. We repeat the word mechanically, but inasmuch as we *intend* thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of it the subjective faculties will respond by quickening our interest in the word, and by strengthening the force of the will. Each repetition will lessen the effort of turning the mind to its new exercise, until it begins to find a certain degree of ease and pleasure in it. And even at this introductory stage, Meditation has a definite physical reaction toward

health, for in these moments of "denying" or turning away from the old material consciousness of ourselves as mortals destined to disease and death, toward a new and spiritual conception of ourselves as immortal expressions of Truth, the subconscious faculties are working out the new idea into the body as surely as they worked out the old order. The physical must reflect the psychical. The body must express the soul. But no lasting change will appear in the body from perception of Truth until that perception has been intensified by feeling, and this brings us to the second or inner part of Meditation which directly concerns the subconscious mind.

In this mood, or moment, we find at first that as soon as we fix the attention on our word, imagination supplies us with a host of meanings for it. Whether we speak it inwardly, or outwardly, it rouses echoes from the ends of the earth. Race-memories of every age crowd in upon us with bewildering rapidity. Centuries of experience flash through us in one tick of the clock. As a simple instance familiar to us all :—it takes twenty seconds to say the lines,

> "And see the shadowy warrior glide
> Along the silent fields of asphodel."

but we can *think* them in one.

Within a single utterance of the word "Spirit,"

imagination can picture the shade of Achilles gliding in search of Patroclus against a ghostly background of Greek and Trojan heroes re-living the epic of their deeds "Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy." Or, if the mind has outgrown the crude conception of Spirit as a superior order of ghost, it may float out into a sense of boundless ether as its image of omnipresent Deity. But this is no less material than the first. To picture Spirit in terms of space is as far from the truth as to suppose that it is the wraith of personality.

Yet an eager imagination will exhaust all its ideals before it will humble itself to own its ignorance of Spirit. The richer the mind, the more it will have to give up in Meditation.

But by continually turning away from our "great possessions," they presently lose their hold over us so that we no longer reckon them at a false value; and when once we have really let them go as being not good enough to compare with the treasure of the new consciousness, a wonderful thing happens; for they are then given back to us to be used in a different way, and to be enjoyed in a greater degree. Intellectual development is never wasted: but we have to be masters of our minds; we have to learn complete control of all our mental faculties.

And for this reason we "forsake" them. We

"deny" the psychical self that we may follow the spiritual Self. We lose our life, or soul, as we now know it, that we may find it as it is in the Original Truth of our Eternal Consciousness.

Therefore, we take no account of thoughts and feelings while we hold our word, and if our attention wanders to some imagination more vivid and persistent than another, we gently draw it back again and concentrate it afresh upon the mode of Being we have chosen for our meditation. In this way, the feeling which we have spent in sympathy with race experience changes its direction from sense to Spirit.

But this withdrawal of sympathy from man as he appears, is "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" to us in some of our moods.

Compassion, or sympathy, the power of *feeling with* our fellows, is so late a development of the psychical consciousness that we cling to it as our greatest possession: it is too recent an acquisition to be lightly parted from. It has stood for so much in our evolution, has marked so great an expansion of consciousness that we find it hard to believe we must let it go in its present form. To pass from the narrow limits of the personal and conscious mind into the fathomless heights and depths of the universal or subconscious mind is a change of such magnitude that it seems impossible

for anything to be greater. What could be more sublime than to suffer and rejoice with *all* men? To speak of withdrawing the sympathy which has begun to feel its wings in the vastness of universal brotherhood sounds like a retrogression to the prison state of selfishness which we had hoped was left behind.

But what do we mean by "selfishness"? If we mean a state in which imagination is not developed enough to enable us to appreciate any experience but our own, this defect of intelligence is corrected when we evolve into conscious possession of the subliminal or universal self. But are we then less "selfish"? Have we not merely exchanged one self for another, a little self for a big one, the particular and objective self for the general and subjective? Have we not expanded into a greater "selfishness"? It is evident that there has been no change in kind: it is the same self multiplied by the universe. We have merely unfolded into a fuller degree of the psychical consciousness.

And is that good enough?

It is necessary, as a transitional phase of our evolution from the animal to the divine. Soul is the middle term between Sense and Spirit: and we must develop a soul before we can "deny" it for the Truth's sake. We have to possess our world before we can renounce it.

But when we recognise this "altruism" as a magnified "egotism"; when we have suffered acutely enough with "all sorts and conditions of men" to perceive that we are only increasing and intensifying in them our own ignorant experiences; when the universal reflection of our defective thoughts and feelings has become intolerable; then we are getting ready to pass on into an order of knowledge which will transform the world into a reflection of the third, and last, and only real Self.

The work of the second degree of Meditation consists then in withdrawing our feeling energy from those things which now call it out, and concentrating it within upon our Principle.

At first we perceive the Perfect, and feel the imperfect; later, we feel the Perfect, and merely perceive the imperfect. For instance, before we have begun to get our imagination under control, the sight, or even the thought, of some defective state of mind or body will rouse such vivid response from the sympathetic intelligence that the condition itself is actually reproduced in us. The stigmata of St. Francis was a famous example of this reproductive power of the subconscious mind: and many of our ordinary troubles are caused in the same way. The "Academy headache" is due to nothing but suggestion. There is no sort of

reason why looking at pictures should tire us, or give us a headache, but we go on sympathetically repeating the experience of other people as if our heads belonged to them and had no more intelligence than automatically to carry out their suggestions. If we see a beggar with a bandaged limb, we instantly feel distress in the same part of our own body, although common sense tells us, a moment after, that the beggar is probably quite hale, and only uses the bandage to strengthen the suggestion of misery which he means us to receive and answer. Or, we see a child hurt itself, and long before it can cry, our very entrails have been shot through with pain which would re-bound upon the child as anxiety were it not for the swift reminder of our reason that this would double the suggestion of fear it has already received through its skin. Clearly this sort of sensitiveness, so employed, is worse than useless. Yet it has been developed in the order of our evolution and must therefore have its perfect use if we but knew it. At least these faulty experiments have shown us how *not* to use our sympathy, for by them we have learnt that *feeling will always reproduce an equivalent of that to which it responds.*

And it is of no importance whether we respond positively or negatively: the effect is the same. Our praise or our blame of anything will equally

attach us to it. When we sentimentally condole with a beggar on his actual or imaginary woes, we are helping to perpetuate a defective form of intelligence in him and in ourselves as surely as if we sternly passed him by with condemnation and repugnance. In both moods we are responding to the wrong suggestion. We are judging according to the obvious appearance of the man, instead of according to the latent reality of him. We are letting our feeling vitalise our outward and sensuous perception of the imperfect, instead of keeping it faithful to the inward perception of the Perfect. Nor does a philosophical indifference mend matters, since this is an attitude studiously acquired by voluntary and conscious effort to protect ourselves from the disturbance of the world's appeal to our emotions. In spite of it, feeling will subconsciously occupy itself with gutter reminiscences of earlier days and present us with some unpleasant result of its industry when we least expect it. Suddenly, one day we wake to find that some disease has got us in its grip, and none can give a reason for its appearance. But have we ever learnt how to control the subconscious self which builds the body? If not, she can only go on working out the ignorant suggestions bequeathed to her by the experience of the race.

In Meditation we learn how to transmute both

the conscious and the subconscious self into a unity of Knowledge which, as our Aryan forbears guessed, is the synonym of Health.

Our purpose in our exercises is to keep the mind clear for the time of all preconceived ideas and feelings about the word we use, that it may create in us a new and true consciousness of itself. We have proved the inadequacy of our conception of these words which express the perfect modes of the Principle of Life, and since the evidence of our senses confirms our faith that this Perfection is latent within us, we concentrate all our energies upon evolving it. During our interval of Meditation we deliberately shut out everyone and everything from our minds. We do not allow our personality to intrude into that Silence with any of the old feelings of self-abasement which perpetually suggested to the subconscious mind a repetition of the very errors we bewailed. Nor do we concern ourselves with the personality of others. No effort, no aspiration, no heart-searching will give us our right relation to the world until we have found our right relation to the Principle of that world. To know the truth of the world we must know that Substance of our own minds without which neither we nor the world could exist. When we know the Truth of ourselves the Truth of everybody else will follow "as echo follows song."

But there are times when the image of some person, or persons, is so obstinately present in the mind during our practice of Meditation that nothing will dislodge it. We say our word and try our best to lay this ghost of old experience which haunts the threshold of our new silence, but it will not go. It is well then to give up struggling with it and to accept the interruption as an opportunity for directly reconstructing the consciousness which it represents. So, instead of turning our back on it in a vain endeavour to forget it in contemplation of Truth, we face about to it and speak our word into it. We look straight at this likeness of the self we are denying and we hold the word of Truth in the very heart of it until the Power of that word creates It's own image in the place of the one which troubled us. There is no personality which cannot be conquered in this way. The Truth within will set us free from every sort of bondage if we will hold to It as the only Power.

And we get far more than freedom from our old fears and weaknesses: we get the "outward and visible sign of this inward and spiritual grace" of regeneration in those who have been nearest to us in the former state. Just as our intimate friends and foes have reflected our old consciousness, so will they reflect the new. As we change, they

change. As we re-make our consciousness of them within by denying the false appearance and affirming the true reality, the corresponding change becomes evident in them without.

This is a miracle worth proving. Its wonders are inexhaustible.

There is a hint of it in General Gordon's life, where we are told that whenever he had a difficult or dangerous interview before him, such as a settlement of rights with some angry native chief, he used, overnight, to call up the mental image of the man he had to deal with on the next day and have a friendly talk with him beforehand. In this imaginary interview he would impressively suggest to the soul of the stranger that they were brothers, and about to meet as such over their business on the morrow. Such a habit would more than account for his extraordinary influence upon men, for he was too wise ever to use this psychical power of suggestion for interference in the conduct of events; he kept it to remind himself and his adversaries of the right relation between them.

The essential difference between the old way of Meditation and the new, is that the new includes the body as being necessary to the soul's realisation of its Spiritual Substance. The old division between soul and body is no longer recognised. Instead of wanting in Meditation to get away from

the body as a hindrance to perfection we are now careful to take it with us in our exercises as an indispensable means to Illumination.

The idealist temperament is inclined when meditating to pass into a dreamy condition in which consciousness of the body is lost. In this mood the student finds himself looking down at his own shape without any feeling that it belongs to him. He is wide awake to all that is going on about him; his psychical consciousness is as active as ever, but it has become separated from its physical aspect. This state, if prolonged unduly from pleasure in its curious restfulness, may deepen into trance, or even into death. In its early stages it can be easily controlled by the will; at any moment a voluntary movement will restore union with the body. It is to be avoided by those who wish to develop the spiritual consciousness, because it is a backward rather than a forward movement in evolution. If we believe that Life is working toward a full and perfect manifestation of Itself in us, it follows that all longing to escape from the body runs athwart the purpose of creation. It serves, even in seeming to thwart, because discontent with things as they are, goads us on to find out how we can improve them; but when we have found the better way we no longer need the old temper

of resistance. Our energies then concentrate upon realising the new order. Psychic reverie and trance, like their physical correspondences sleep and death, are backward alternations in development in so far as they are a withdrawal from the objective plane of manifestation. While we are but half made, while the objective consciousness is as yet too imperfectly evolved to be fully alive to the Truth, we need some form of sleep to restore the energies exhausted in the process of growing by resistance. The human male, whose brain marks the highest level yet reached in objective consciousness, requires less sleep to keep him in healthy activity than women, children, savages, and animals, who represent a descending scale of cranial or self-conscious intelligence. As we become more and more self-consciously awake to the Knowledge-Principle within us, which knows no variableness, no opposite of ignorance, we shall begin to see what St. John meant when he said of the Perfect City of God that "there shall be no night there."

Students of Meditation will find that as they approach its third stage, they are no longer dependent as in old days upon sleep for restoration. Five minutes' Meditation will refresh them more than five hours of physical sleep. But they will not, therefore, rush to the conclusion that they

can live without sleep or food. Such violent extremes of conduct do not suggest themselves to the soul which is realising Unity. To inhibit any natural function of the body is not the way to spiritualise it. Transformation comes by using the body with Knowledge. We lose our bodies for want of Knowledge. We do not know enough yet to keep ourselves alive. Our bodies must perish as long as we know so little of Spiritual Unity that our feelings wear us out, or knock us to pieces, by their ceaseless alternation between inertia and violence, by that perpetual resistance to an opposite which is the law of evolution.

The act of breathing is a simple and unfailing means of connecting Meditation with the body. It is not necessary to practise the elaborate details given by Eastern writers on the Science of Breath. It is enough, at first, to breathe through the nostrils easily, deeply, regularly, and silently, holding the word meanwhile with the intention that as the air penetrates, nourishes and quickens the body, so the Spirit of the word shall inform, restore, and vivify the soul.

Our imperfect conception of things physical leads us to suppose that the vitality of the body depends upon supply from without. We think it lives by air and food and sleep, and is subject to conditions of climate and diet. For this reason

we are apt, in using the analogy of the breath, to imagine that as we take in the air from without, so our spiritual inspiration also comes to us from some far-off and incomprehensible source. This old error can be corrected by remembering that the evolution of the body was from within, outward, and that the same Principle which formed us before we came into self-conscious existence, is still within us, working through the subconscious mind of the vital brain to fulfil for us the order of life we most desire to realise in objective experience. Air would be useless to us but for that Principle within which uses it for us in building up our bodies, as it will also use the word of Truth for us in building up our souls. In both alike we depend upon the Spirit of Life within us.

Imagination can always be turned to account in piloting the word into the bodily consciousness, and each student finds some way which seems easier than another. Such details are unimportant. The main consideration is, to be sure that the body has its full share in meditation, and is never left behind as something separate from the soul.

One other point is worth mentioning because, like many obvious things, it is easily missed.

We cannot concentrate upon two things at once.

This, of course, sounds absurd, but none the less we all gravely try to do it without a suspicion of its impossibility.

We try, for instance, to live within and without at the same time. The more eager we are to realise our Truth the more likely we shall be to make the mistake. The whole trend of Idealism prepares us for it.

What is the "detachment" we have long and diligently practised, but an attempt to do one thing and think another? What is that art of "recollection," dear to the modern Epicurean of the nobler sort, but an effort to live in the world, and scrupulously to discharge his obligations to it, while keeping the citadel of his mind preoccupied with the ideal of a more beautiful state? It was good, as the best we could do until we learnt "a more excellent way"; but it was not concentration.

The real concentration is an act of faith; for when we go in to our Principle in Meditation we entirely cut off the world we know, and when we come out to the business of the moment on the plane of facts, we trust our Principle to give us there, the outward and visible result of our meditation.

But we do not halt midway on a borderland which is neither within nor without. For con-

centration we have to be by turns quite in, and quite out. It does not do to come out from our meditation and be anxiously looking inward to the silence of the mind as if we were afraid that our Principle would not play up and back us properly unless we were constantly hovering round It to reassure ourselves of It's Being and remind It of our Existence.

The best form of meditation for realising the union of the within and the without is for the personal self-consciousness of the cranial or secondary brain which represents Existence, to listen to words of Truth spoken up to it from the subconscious self of the vital or primary brain which represents Being. In this way we can realise our Truth both passively and actively, for we rest completely while we hear our Principle saying to us "I am thy Infinite Life," and we are roused again into self-consciousness when we in turn speak back It's words to It and say

"Thou art my Infinite Life."

By devoting leisure moments to the practice of such an interchange between the upper or outer brain and the under or inner brain, the consciousness soon begins to realise in some degree the Health or Wholeness which comes from Knowledge of Truth.

And the power gained in these intervals of

subjective concentration will be proved during the longer periods of time spent in objective concentration upon our doings in the world.

The body and its circumstances will be the test of our development, the unerring witness of the degree to which we are able to manifest the reality of ourselves. Objective existence, therefore, on the plane of the senses becomes increasingly good as the opportunity for supreme attainment.

With such a conception of the possibilities of life we can no longer feel "as strangers and pilgrims" in the world: the "without" can no more be for us a place of exile where we pine homesick for a heaven which is only to be entered through the grave and gate of bodily death. Life is ready to give all that man is ready to take. But Life is entirely passive. We have to help ourselves to everything we want.

If we want the Perfect, we can learn in Meditation that Being and Existence are One here and now, for the Science of Silence will teach us how to regenerate our consciousness into "a new heaven and a new earth."

LECTURE VI.

Practical Meditation.

Be still, and know that I AM

Spirit
Life
Knowledge
Power
Holiness
Faith
Health
Wealth
Unity
Love
Joy
Peace
Righteousness
Wisdom
Goodness
Grace
Truth
Beauty
Freedom
Principle

I Am thy Holy and Eternal Substance,
Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent,
and there is none beside Me.

EACH word in the foregoing list expresses a mode of Being and is interchangeable with every other. But at first they do not commend themselves as equally acceptable, for we do not even perceive them to be synonymous. The word Health does not rouse in us the same kind of feeling as the word Spirit. One seems to be homely, human, mundane, and material, while the other in comparison seems mysterious, sublime, and awe-inspiring. There is a gap between them. This gap represents our old "heresy of separateness" between Spirit and matter, God and man.

Again, to many of our moods, the word Knowledge is cold comfort as a substitute for Love; and we should hardly explain Power as Holiness. Our experience of these words is as yet too imperfect for us to know their real meaning: our defective consciousness of them betrays itself by the fact that the effect of each is changed at once if we affix some qualification such as Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient. We recognise a difference between Life and Eternal Life, between Faith aad Omniscient Faith, between Power and Infinite Power.

We find that there is no unity in our conception of these words: each one of them is not only different from the others, but it also suggests an opposite to itself. We have therefore to own that our present consciousness of the modes of Being is psychical, and contradictory, not spiritual, or "without variance." But a better understanding comes as often as we let the mind dwell silently and steadily upon its Principle without disturbance from any of its old imaginations.

It is a good preliminary exercise to take a familiar phrase such as

"Be still and know that I Am God,"

and repeat this mentally over and over again, each time substituting for the word "God" one of the words in the foregoing sequence.

Most of us here in the West honour the writings of St. Paul, and he says twice over: "Know ye not that ye are a temple (or sanctuary) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?" We shall still be well within our religious traditions, therefore, if we associate the words Holy Spirit with that vital brain in the centre of the body which, as we know from embryology, is the organ of our primary consciousness. The subconscious intelligence which origin-

ally built our bodies for us and re-builds them from day to day as long as we possess them, may fitly be the voice of its own sanctuary, silently saying to us from within :

Be still and know that I Am God, and beside Me there is none else.

I Am *Spirit* : In Me there is no matter.

I Am *Life* : I Am thy freedom from death.

I Am *Knowledge* : My will in thee is Knowledge and not ignorance.

I Am *Power* : In Me there is no weakness.

I Am *Holiness* : I Am thy freedom from sin.

I Am *Faith* : My will in thee is Faith and not fear.

I Am *Health* : In Me there is no disease.

I Am *Wealth* : I Am thy freedom from want.

I Am *Unity* : My will in thee is Unity and not strife.

I Am *Love* : In Me there is no pride.

I Am *Joy* : I Am thy freedom from sorrow.

I Am *Peace* : My will in thee is Peace and not trouble.

I Am *Righteousness* : In Me there is no wrong.

I Am *Wisdom* : I Am thy freedom from folly.

I Am *Goodness* : My will in thee is Goodness and not evil.

I Am *Grace* : In Me there is no condemnation.

I Am *Truth* : I Am thy freedom from error.

I Am *Beauty*: My will in thee is Beauty and not ugliness.

I Am *Principle*: In Me there is no personality

It is best to take each of these sentences separately and use it for a week's meditation before changing to the next; but minds which are exasperated by monotony may need a long and changeful sequence to pacify the irritability which sometimes comes in the early days of practising the Science of Silence.

The following seven denials and affirmations are a most useful daily exercise for those who wish to develop the new order of consciousness.

I. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from sin, guilt, judgment, condemnation, criticism, blame, and disapproval of myself and others.

The Truth of me is Holiness, Grace, Unity.

II. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from pride, prejudice, and personality.

The Truth within me is Omniscient Love.

III. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from anger, hatred, cruelty, revenge, strife, envy, jealousy, suspicion, and resentment.

The Truth of me is Wisdom, Goodness, Beauty, Peace, Involuntary Self-Control.

IV. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from

weakness, want, dissatisfaction, discontent, depression, disappointment, and self-pity.

The Truth within me is Omnipotence, Health, Wealth, and Joy.

V. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from fear, anxiety, foreboding, grief, doubt, worry, and impatience.

The Truth of me is Faith, Almighty, Omnipresent, my Infinite Protection and Supply.

VI. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from ignorance, deception, vanity, and all inordinate affections.

The Truth of me is Knowledge, Rightness, Substance, Principle.

VII. In Spirit and in Truth I am free from inertia and violence in mind, and heart, and soul, and sense.

The Truth of me is Life; Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipotent Life.

There is hard work to be done in clearing the mind of its preconceived ideas, and many people are bored by what seems to them mere senseless repetition in this teaching, but experiment, if carried far enough, will convince them that it is the only way into the silence of spiritual meditation.

There is no peace until the old errors are turned out, and the soul is emptied of its belief in the experience of the senses.

As soon as a little stillness comes, we are content to leave long phrases and rest upon a single word at a time, without thought, or any craving for change. Then the intervals between the mental repetitions of the word grow gradually longer; and later still, when we begin to realise its Life as our Life, its Substance as our Substance, the form of the word is no longer necessary to keep the mind stayed upon its Source. By patient reiteration and concentration, the pulses of the body learn to say the words for us even in our sleep. But there is a fight or two before this for those whose senses are highly developed. And perhaps the toughest fight of all is over the first of these words, *Spirit*. The new etheric theory of physical science is an immense help in reconstructing our conception of the universe, but a mental habit built up by æons of evolution is not changed in a few days by a new theory. Physicists may tell us plainly that the whole world is made up of etheric monads vibrating at different rates, and psychologists may tell us still more plainly that those vibrations are controlled by thought, but this does not make us feel that walls are less solid, air less ambient, water less fluent, and fire less hot. We see the universe

through our feelings, and wonder why God allows it to be imperfect. But our feelings belong to us: they are our own affair: our personality, or particular way of feeling about things, is of our own making. We can re-make our way of seeing the world.

We say that "God is Spirit," and that beside Him there is none else. Yet our conception of the world is anything but spiritual, since we put most of our feeling into an opposite which we call "matter."

We say that God is All, but He is evidently not All to us, or our consciousness would be All Good. The universe depends on man, not man on the universe. The world will never be perfect to man until he wakes up to the Truth that he is the maker of it. God created the original pattern, but man has to work it out. Man has that pattern of Perfection within his own mind and all the faculties by which to realise it objectively.

God works through us: He is our Power, and we can learn how to use it intelligently to make a perfect world as surely as we have used it ignorantly to make the imperfect one now on our hands. At present we sell our birthright to the world. We give it power over us by believing that we are subject to the conditions we ourselves

have made. *We* are responsible for things as they are, and we can change them as a man changes the furniture of his house. We have to get new furniture for our minds: the old stuff is not good enough. It would be new to have a consciousness which took no account of evil, a consciousness in which there was no response to negative suggestions. We should see the world very differently if the experiences which now disturb us had no more power over us than fallen leaves have over the tree that sheds them. It would be another sort of earth if our feeling nature were so preoccupied with the Truth within, that "evil" had become for us nothing but a blank which called out our power to fill it. We begin to realise our power when we know our primary consciousness as the Spirit-Substance which we are continually shaping into thoughts and things. In his "'prentice" days man has to make things by the slow process of the senses. If he wants a certain thing he pictures it in his mind: the wish shapes definitely into a mental image: then he proceeds to realise its objective form by using his hands to make it according to the pattern-idea, or he impresses the mental form upon other people and pays them to make it for him. But as he develops further, he finds that his wish will realise itself without any *doing* on his part. He does not even have to

think about it, or brood over it, or exert his will in any way. An image flashes out for a moment in the mind, is accepted or rejected with equal swiftness, and is forgotten until its tangible shape appears ready for use. In the interval between the imagination and its objective realisation, which is often surprisingly short, the mind has been busy with its task for the day and has not given a thought to the working out of its wish. The fulfilment just "happens" in the natural course of events. So, by degrees, man becomes less and less careful for the world of appearance, for he proves that from within his own mind he can get anything and everything he needs. He finds it is literally true that "things" are "added unto" those who "seek the Kingdom," for as his energies turn toward his Principle, he has but to feel a wish, and sanction it, for it to fulfil itself without effort.

And then he discovers that all his wants and wishes resolve themselves into one. He becomes unable to wish in the old ways. Feeling no longer shapes itself into the images of things and persons, conditions and events. His only "want" is to increase his knowledge of the Spirit within him. Desire has come to rest at last in the Silence of the All: the soul of man has learnt the wholeness of dwelling, or staying itself upon its

Principle, and finds its utmost aspiration "fulfilled in measureless content."

"For *all things* are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

The world of things is controlled by the conscious or personal man, and he is controlled by the subconscious or Divine Man, who is in the image and after the likeness of the One Eternal Perfect.

Life. It is good to have the second word of our sequence placed between the words Spirit and Knowledge, for all defects in our conception of Existence, all the imperfections of life as we live it, are due to our ignorance about Matter. Life becomes completely changed as soon as we *know* that Spirit is the Substance of Matter, the Reality out of which all Appearance is fashioned by the mind and the senses. There is but One Life, yet we mentally divide it into two as sharply as if Being and Existence were different in kind. We read and sing devoutly in our Psalms that God is our Life, but when we come to consider it, we find that our life as we know it is by no means all Good; our experiences could hardly be described in terms of the sheer, unmixed, unvarying Goodness which knows no opposite. We have had too much buffeting, too many bruises, to feel that our days have always been good to us, how-

ever clearly our reason may tell us that these things have been good for us in the development of character. We have a lurking idea that there is a better kind of Good than the "difficult blessedness" we have hitherto enjoyed. We improve upon it freely in imagination by picturing a future state which will balance the deficit in our present life-account.

If Goodness really *was* our Life we should not be always looking forward to perfection hereafter.

We are bewitched by the three periods of Time, for Past, Present and Future seem to represent our ideas of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. But we shall be in Purgatory forever if Heaven is always being postponed to "the life to come," "the world to come," "the age to come." We speak now in the same phrases that St. Paul used two thousand years ago, and the world two thousand years hence might still have been talking of the age of Fulfilment as "to come" in some problematical future, if America had not developed the kind of nervous mania which demands the utmost that can be got out of the age that now is.

In the New World of Consciousness which it has discovered, the Lord's Prayer is spoken in the present tense. The New Mystics of America say to their "Father which is in heaven" within the temple of the body "Thy Kingdom *is* come. Thy

Will *is* done." And according to their faith it is done unto them in the earth of the senses without as in the heaven of the Spirit within.

The Truth says "I am the Living One."

"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."

But we can be only half alive while we put off to the future our chance of realising the Spirit of Life which is latent within us at each moment of our existence, waiting for our faith in It to call It out into objective expression in our bodies.

Knowledge of this Spirit of Life is what we want. The thing we call knowledge is merely a systematic arrangement of our evolutionary experience; a record, more or less complete, of our cosmic memories. But that is the history of our journey away from our Source; the story of our "Prodigal Son" excursion into the "far country" of the senses; the way of ignorance which leads back to Knowledge. For when a man has "wasted his substance" by spending the whole energy of his mind upon the world of *things*, and a "mighty famine" arises, and he begins "to be in want," and longs in vain to satisfy himself with the husky food of facts on which the animal intelligence is nourished, he comes to himself at last by remembering, and returning to his original state.

After ages of experiment the mind becomes

humble enough to realise the vanity of seeking its Cause in the world of effects, and turns inward, away from the shadows of actual or ideal experience, to learn that Knowledge which is the Omniscient Substance of Life.

Power. Our conception of power has been evolved by our experience of force, which is Power translated on to the plane of the senses.

What we see as mass and force with our physical senses, we feel as inertia and violence with our psychical senses. The Power-realm of consciousness which is Unity, is as yet unknown. Those who search for the purpose of discovering this innermost of themselves find that on the way toward It they become sensitive to degrees of inertia and violence in their consciousness which would formerly have been imperceptible to them. Conditions of mind and body which they used to call "peace," "rest," "stillness," "silence," they recognise as inertia masquerading under a fine disguise; and alternative extremes, which once passed for the inspired activity of Power, are detected as varieties of intellectual and emotional violence. This experience has led many Eastern mystics to believe that all self-consciousness must be unspiritual, since its perception of defect appears to become more acute with each degree of its evolution. But this is to suppose that the Perfect

cannot perfectly express Itself, that Cause is less powerful than effect, that Being is unable fully to manifest as Existence. For if the Perfect be Perfect It must be able to manifest Perfection, and if God be manifest in Man, Man must share the consciousness of that perfect manifestation.

Our old mysticism with all its ideals of unity did not *realise,* though it clearly enough *perceived,* the unity of sense and spirit. For it, activity was necessarily imperfect and unspiritual; and this illusion affects the soul in so many subtle ways that we all suffer it in one form or another at some point in our evolution. But it passes, with the rest of our divided imaginations. For a time we alternate between ever-lessening extremes of duality, and then we find the centre where the spiritual unity of Peace and Power takes the place both of psychical inertia and violence, and of physical mass and force.

By dwelling in that Unity we learn to use our minds and bodies as perfect instruments upon their respective planes of expression. They work spontaneously by the peaceful inspiration of the Power within them, and are no longer curbed and driven by the compelling force of the will. We talk about "will-*power,*" but Power is a *spiritual* word, and has nothing to do with the violent exertions by which the voluntary consciousness

enforces obedience upon itself before it has learnt the involuntary power of Truth.

Holiness. This word suggests many old ideas which have to be forsaken by those who are devoting body and soul to the development of the New Consciousness. It is looked upon as the opposite to sin. "The Beauty of Holiness" is appreciated by contrast with the ugliness of sin. And sin, which the intellect calmly perceives as a state of imperfectly developed consciousness, a transitional phase of ignorance in man's evolution toward Knowledge, is felt in the soul as guilt, condemnation and degradation. This division in the personal consciousness effectually prevents it from realising Wholeness or Holiness. We have to develop the intelligence of our emotions. We have to break them of this bad habit of preoccupation with sin and death; we have to teach them that these ignorant experiences are not good enough to be reproduced. We must quietly turn back our feelings when they rush out to dissipate their energies on some temptation to respond to the old suggestions.

For instance, we see a passing hearse, and instantly the race-belief in the dominion of death asserts itself. If we accept that false imagination, if we acquiesce in that ignorant superstition, we are consenting unto sin and preparing its consequences for ourselves.

For the wages of ignorance is death, but the gift of Omniscient Goodness is Eternal Life through faith in the Christ-Consciousness within.

If we *know* that our bodies are the temple of the Living God, the "sanctuary" of the Spirit of Holiness, how can we believe that death, as the result of ignorance or sin, has any power over us? How can we separate our bodies from the Wholeness of the spiritual consciousness?

In forming a new conception of the word Holiness it is a great help to use only its synonym "Wholeness" until it ceases indirectly to suggest the old association with negative opposites. And if we also read the new meaning into our emotions about Beauty we shall not long be duped by æsthetic transcendentalism. To meditate on "the Beauty of Wholeness" will "heal our hearts of all inordinate affection"; the former ideals will stand no chance against the Perfect or Eternal Beauty which knows "no variation"; for that Spirit of Truth within will set us free from the bondage of alternation between the beauty and ugliness of sense-illusion.

Our natural tendency toward mental dissipation rather than concentration gives an importance to this otherwise trivial detail of using the word *whole* instead of holy. The slight novelty attracts the attention and helps to keep it "one-pointed,"

where the more familiar form would let it go scattering off in all the old directions. The obvious suggestion of the change is that we should give our whole minds to our exercise of Silence, since a state of mental wholeness, or unity, cannot admit of half-heartedness, or any diffusion of interest. It takes *all* the heart, and *all* the soul, and *all* the mind, and *all* the strength to realise our trinity of consciousness as the Whole, or Holy, One.

Faith. If there is one word more than another which should stand to us for Substance, it is Faith. But we see it through the wavering uncertainty of our conflicting *beliefs*. We know it so little that we actually take it to be the same as our way of believing, which is nothing more than conjecture or opinion as to probabilities.

But Faith is as far from this as Love is far from workhouse-charity. Faith is intuitive knowledge. It never supposes, or hopes, or thinks: it *knows*. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God." It is that special aspect of Knowledge through which we are able to *understand* the miracle of Creation.

"Faith is the substance, the ground, or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Or, as the Revised Version gives it, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." And the marginal

reading is, "Faith is the giving substance to things hoped for, the test of things not seen."

We all use this creative faculty every day of our lives, but we do not call it Faith. When we *give substance* to anything we want, we call it "seeing it in imagination:" and sometimes when we do this we get an odd feeling that it will come true. And it does. The odd feeling is an intuitive perception that the imagination is complete, fulfilled. The senses realise it later.

When we have had a good many of these experiences we begin to recognise them as an elementary stage in the development of Faith.

If we for the moment roughly define Faith as a peculiarly vivid kind of imagination, we shall at once feel more at home with it, and shall also be able to judge of the way in which we are using this creative power of ours. What does our imagination turn to most often, and with most feeling? Our answer to this question will show us the sort of future we are making for ourselves, and, indirectly, for those related to us. It will also give us a practical and common-sense reason for meditation. For when once we prove that the image-making faculty of the mind, quickened by feeling, can reproduce in the outer world whatever inspiration it receives, there is evidently nothing for us to do but to teach it, as soon as we can,

to receive only from its Principle of Holiness or Perfection.

Then we begin to use it to realise Wholeness, or Health, in our bodies, and during this process of proving, or testing the things not seen, we reverse the famous definition of the schoolboy who said: "Faith is believing things you know are not true."

It is easy enough to trust the things you have *proved* true. We all put faith in the things we have *experienced*. That is why we have to work so hard at first at this New consciousness: we have to get a new sort of experience to replace the old: we have to oust the old beliefs by a more intelligent use of our imagination and our feeling. Our education has only just begun. We are babies in the kinder-garten of the senses. We have to develop the intuitive faculty of the subconscious mind: we have to evolve a higher order of reason than we now know.

St. Paul exhorting the sensuous Corinthians says, "Be not children in *mind*: in malice be ye babes, but in mind be of full age, be men." And in writing to the Galatians, he says, "We also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the elements of the world."

"Before Faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the Faith which should afterwards be revealed."

Faith is an expansion of consciousness which comes in the order of our evolution; a finer, fuller, stronger form of intelligence which develops in us as we stay the mind upon its Truth within. It is the active or working power of the Knowledge-Principle as *understood* by the full-grown man.

To anyone who has begun to grow into this intuitive Knowledge which can "remove mountains," its effects seem as simple as those obtained by the more slowly moving laws of Nature which the senses from long habit accept without question.

But while the power of Faith is still a mystery hidden in the undeveloped depths of our consciousness we sometimes wonder why people who have it do not use it in the obvious ways suggested by the senses.

As children, we ask: "Why didn't Jesus Christ make *all* the sick people well? And why didn't He make all the naughty people good?" In those days we think a man can be mended from without, like a tin soldier, or a wooden horse.

A little later, we think he will *grow* well, like an ailing plant, if we give him the right outward conditions of food, rest, atmosphere, and such medical or surgical treatment as may seem proper to the case. Later still, we learn that a man can only be truly healed by developing a conscious-

ness of the Spirit or Substance of Wholeness within him; and then we begin to understand why Faith works inwardly for the quickening of the soul's intelligence, rather than outwardly for the gratification of the wonder-loving senses. If Faith be the Power derived from intuitive sympathy, or union of feeling, with the Creative Principle of Knowledge, clearly no one could use it to the order of sensuous curiosity.

The temper of mind which depends upon outward proof of Truth is the traditionalism which bows to the authority of other people's experiences when these have been accepted by the world. While we are in this mood or moment of our evolution we are incapable of discernment. It is a natural attitude. But "the natural (or undeveloped) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned." "Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom." In our Jew, or materialist, mood we demand to be convinced of spiritual things through the evidence of the senses, and in our Greek, or idealist, mood we seek illumination in "the wisdom of the world." The spiritual consciousness to the first is "a stumbling block," and to the second "foolishness."

But when we have had suffering enough of

body and soul to break down the arrogance of the senses, and develop an imagination which can no longer be satisfied with ideal experiences of past and future, we are ready to learn of the real or spiritual Self whose dwelling is the silence of a mind and heart made "poor" or empty of its former thoughts and feelings.

We are told that "Faith worketh by Love" but we do not yet know the meaning of these words. They are beyond the range of our present intelligence. We find, however, on examining our consciousness that we have a working knowledge of something which corresponds to them as shadow to substance. Our experience of the reproductive power of feeling wrought by imagination makes us able dimly to guess at what this power might be if translated from the psychical order to the spiritual. We have therefore within us as we actually are at this moment, the practical means by which to begin the reconstruction of our

Health. First we will improve the pattern to which our faculties are always working. We will correct our idea of the word by using it as the equivalent of all these other modes of Being. It shall no longer be degraded by any negative association. For Eternal Health is "a jealous God" which knows of no rival, admits of no opposite.

The New Health is the manifestation in soul and sense of the Spirit of Wholeness or Holiness. It is the outward and visible sign of that inward and spiritual grace of Unity in which mind and body work by the direct inspiration of their indwelling Principle of Perfection.

It is worth a moment to refresh our memories of the etymology of the word Health. The Northern Anglo-Saxon *hál* softens into *hôl* in the Southern dialect, and *holy* is the same as *hálig*, whole, sound, healthy, perfect, which is cognate with the Greek *kalós*, fair, beautiful. So, when once we really acknowledge our bodies as temples sacred to the Health Spirit, the Hale, Whole, Holy Spirit, which is the Beauty of Perfection, we shall look upon thoughts of disease and death as unfit to cross the threshold of our minds, and to yield our feeling to such suggestions will become as "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," the "Lord and Giver of Life."

There are certain experiences in the regeneration of the body which, so far, seem to be inevitable to all who devote themselves to the development of the New Self Consciousness. They go through a period—more or less proportionate to the gravity and duration of their previous sufferings—in which they *appear* to repeat many of their old ignorant experiences. To the

onlooker they seem to have made no appreciable progress, for at intervals the unmistakable symptoms of old troubles recur, and every assurance that they do not have the same effect as before is treated as so much make-believe to bolster up a new fad. But if our temple of Health has been long desecrated by the traffic of falsehood and disease, it is possible that when the Truth, the Holy One, *does* take possession of It's own there will be a time of cleansing with "a scourge of small cords."

If we have made "the house of prayer" into "a den of thieves" there may be some little disturbance when the robber thoughts and feelings are "cast out."

It is reasonable that these experiences which came to us through the senses should go out in the same way; for since the body shares in our errors it must also share in the purgation of our enlightenment.

At worst it is but a transient process, a travail by which we enter into life. For the difference, which in time convinces the most sceptical observer that these apparently negative conditions are but the *ghosts* of former troubles, is that each such experience leaves mind and body more healthy, and more alive, as "purgation" passes into contemplation and realisation of Wholeness.

Love. To see what Love is *not,* we have only to look out at our reflection in the world as it knows itself at present with all its sentimental likes and dislikes, all its passionate attractions and repulsions.

If we were to banish the word from our vocabulary for a few years and meditate meanwhile upon the words "Omniscient Goodness," there would be a surprising change in our consciousness.

It is a step in the right direction when every impulse of the heart toward those whom it *thinks* it loves, is counterbalanced by an involuntary impulse toward those whom it thinks it fears.

The soul is on the way to peace when the imagination of the one most loved calls up as its inseparable shadow the likeness of the one most feared; for then it learns that it cannot truly say "I love" while there is anyone among the living or the dead whom it shrinks from with involuntary aversion.

Does the soul suffer bondage to the senses?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is the Freedom of the *Spirit.*

Does it believe that there is power in death?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Life.*

Does it lack understanding?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Knowledge.*

Does it suffer the weakness of inertia and violence?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Power*.

Has it a sense of want, dissatisfaction, incompleteness?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Holiness*.

Does it feel anxious, doubtful, uninspired, bewildered?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Faith*.

Does it ail, despond or grieve?

Then Love is unknown to it, for Love is *Health*.

Does it feel fear, repugnance, blame, pride, jealousy, resentment against itself, or any other creature?

Then Love is unknown to it, for these are cast out by *Love*.

Does it cheat itself of the present by waiting for a future Heaven?

Then it is ignorant of Love, for Love is *Eternal Life*, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

Our childish conception of Eternity as endless time still clings to us, and we have not yet outgrown our youthful habit of trying to measure the Infinite in terms of space. Yet we perceive that these ideas involve the error of attempting to compare unlike things.

Eternal Life is unvarying Life, changeless Life, Life which knows no possibility of reaction or

alternation from Itself. It is that Life of which the modes are always equal to each other. And this is the order of Life, latent within us, which awaits the co-operation of our intelligence to manifest Itself in us here and now as the Spiritual Consciousness of the Christ, or Ultimate Man.

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